
Major
Sculpt.

LETTERS

written occaſionally on

The cuſtoms of foreign nations in regard to harlots:

The lawleſs commerce of the ſexes:

The repentance of

PROSTITUTES:

The great humanity and beneficial effects of the

Magdalene Charity

IN LONDON:

And the abſurd notions of the

METHODISTS:

WITH

Prayers and Meditations

On the moſt intereſting circumſtances and events of life.

By *J. Hanway*, Eſq;

Go and ſin no more.

LONDON; M.DCC.LXI.

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E R R A T A.

Page 304. line 20. for the father read *her father.*
393. l. 19. for companion r. *companions.*
410. l. 2. " before *awake.*
411. l. 18. " after *ever.*
425. l. 9. dele *is.*
458. l. 16. dele *and.*
460. l. 1. dele *man and the.*
487. l. 19. for lows r. *low.*
563. l. 11. for ſuch r. *ſuch powers at leaſt.*
580. l. 13. for intimidates r. *intimidate.*

Introductory Account of the Piety, and Humanity, of the Magdalene Charity.

Addreſs to the Friends of repentant Proſtitutes.

ADDRESSES which have any ſemblance of *Dedications*, however *general* their object, are ſuppoſed to be *panegyrics*; and it is happy for mankind when proper occaſions offer for ſhewing *reſpect* for each other. The *zeal* which you demonſtrate for the honor of *God*, and the preſervation of the *moſt wretched* of the *human kind*, is very *commendable*; but the conſideration of our *common frailties*, and the *iniquities* for which the *beſt* of us are accountable, render *pompous words*, on ſuch an occaſion, *improper*, if not *abſurd*. Indeed to *merit praiſe*, we muſt be reſerved in our *acceptance* of it.

In the mean while, the ſame powers which enable us to talk the language of *reaſon* and *religion* on other ſubjects, will, I preſume, make us competent judges of this. Our beſt knowledge in all things is gained by experience; but few are acquainted with the objects in queſtion, except thoſe who are too vitiouſly inclined to *think*, or *act* with propriety, in relation to them; therefore we muſt not be ſurprized to find the ſubject ſo much *enveloped* in a kind of *myſtery*. — This ſeems to be one of the ſecret cauſes why ſo many become victims, who might be *preſerved*, for it is

very apparent, that as ſome are awed and *prevented* from *falling* by timely caution; *others*, not made ſenſible of the turpitude of the crime, *ſin without reſerve*.

Much has been written to *deter* mankind from *ſin* in general, as well as againſt *particular offences*: and alas! many books are calculated to favor a propenſity to ſinfulneſs. But of all the breaches of the *chriſtian law*, not one appears to be worſe underſtood, more pains taken to gloſs it over, or more ingenuity employed to refine it away, than this article of promiſcuous commerce and lawleſs correſpondencies. On the other hand, we ſee no crime attended with worſe conſequences, as to bodily diſeaſe; nor any producing more fatal effects in laying waſte the *purity* of the ſoul.

It is a queſtion with ſome well-meaning people, if it is not an injury to ſociety, to attempt the giving harlots any relief. They would leave them entirely to make the moſt they can of the *labor* of their hands, not conſidering that many are brought under ſuch circumſtances as exclude them from the means of *health*, or *employment*, or *inſtruction*; nor reflecting that the other ſex, equally criminal with regard to this commerce, find the ſame countenance, and meet with the ſame eſteem, at leaſt from the greateſt part of the world, as if they were entirely *innocent*. Is this vindicating the *rights* of human nature? Is this imitating the *impartial juſtice of God*? Or is it the way to eſtabliſh righteouſneſs amongſt men? The *complaint* is indeed as common as the *evil*; and the *remedy* as often neglected; the woman is treated as incorrigible, whilſt the offence lies

moſt-

moſt frequently at the door of the *man*, and ſhe is generally the *beſt* diſpoſed to ſubmit to the laws of reaſon and religion; yet ſo it is, ſhe muſt be *moſt* puniſhed.

Thoſe who would thus bar the gates of mercy againſt all *female proſtitutes*, muſt not be ſurprized to ſee ſo many victims offered up to *infamy*, and periſhing under *penury* and *diſeaſe*, with all the horrors of their guilt. Such as *repent* are ſurely not ſhut out from *mercy in heaven*: beſides, if we thus extend our charity, we may learn to imitate the *conduct* of the *Saviour* of mankind, and keep in view the example of his mercy, on ſimilar occaſions. This will raiſe a *noble emulation* in virtuous minds; give *ſtrength* of *judgment*, as well as *purity* of *heart*, and in ſome meaſure counteract the miſeries which *vice* has introduced into the world.

Your attention to the moſt wretched of the human ſpecies, laid the foundation of theſe *letters* and *meditations*: it induced me to employ ſome evenings of retirement, not without hopes that I might be enabled to throw in a *mite* towards the ſupport of your undertaking. It has long ſince been apparent to me, that whatever notions might prevail concerning a propenſity to vice in *women*, who have been guilty of proſtitution, ſome of them muſt be ſuppoſed to have an inclination towards cultivating an intereſt with *virtue*. Many who are *too well* acquainted with *vice*, will naturally be induced to try what *comforts* virtue can furniſh, ſelf-preſervation teaching us to fly from that which we know or believe to be *evil*. Let men talk as they pleaſe, the facts, which juſtify an opinion in favor of *penitent proſtitutes*,

titutes, are better arguments than the moſt *refined ſpeculations* drawn from the general notions of the world. Your *opening* the gate of mercy to thoſe againſt whom it uſed to be *ſhut*, widens the avenues to *repentance* in ſome, as well as *charity* in others, not only in *opinion*, but in *practice*; whereas *contrary* notions produce quite *oppoſite effects*. Many a wretched Being, reduced to the loweſt ebb of *miſery*, now finds a relief, which hardly any thing but a *miracle* could otherwiſe have afforded. How many generous hearts never reached the knowledge of half the diſtreſs of theſe objects; and how many others would have contributed to the relief of them, had they known how, or had it not been generally thought diſgraceful. The path is now marked out, and nothing forbids our compliance with the *attractive powers of humanity*, or the *glorious calls of religion*. We may now ſuccor the WRETCHED, whoſe *ſouls*, as well as *bodies*, need a *healing* hand, and be morally certain that our charity will in a great meaſure anſwer the purpoſe intended.

You have had the courage to appear as zealous advocates for the diſtreſſed. Armed with *candor* and *perſuaſion*, you have brought the antient prejudices of our nation in a very ſingular inſtance, to a more exact concordance with reaſon, and ſtruck out a channel of beneficence, the more intereſting to the human heart, as it is intended for the ſervice of the ſex, for whom heaven has appointed men to be the *inſtructors*, the *guardians*, and the *friends*.

Time brings all things to maturity, and *heaven* has been propitious to your *wiſhes!* You have performed more, I believe,

believe, than yourſelves imagined to be *practicable*; and thoſe only can conceive a *true idea* of theſe labors, who ſee the *effects* of them. If any fondly imagine that an attempt of this ſort will entirely turn the current of ſenſuality, into the pure ſtreams of *temperance* and *chaſtity*, they will indeed find themſelves diſappointed, not from any defect in the thing itſelf, but becauſe their hopes of it were much *too ſanguine*.

It is an *undoubted truth*, that there are many *young women* who *repent* from their hearts, and would ſhow forth their *repentance* if they knew where to eat a morſel of *honeſt bread*, or find ſhelter from the miſery they have brought on their own heads. And if you *can* ſave ſuch from an *early grave*, ſurely it will be worth your time, your money, and your toil. If you can be inſtrumental in ſaving theſe from *endleſs perdition*, let *opinion* warp mens judgments, and the *thoughtleſs* laugh at the attempt, yet, in the eye of *reaſon* and *religion*, the taſk will not be the leſs glorious.

It ſeems indeed moſt conſiſtent to turn the balance of your favor on the ſide of thoſe who are *youngeſt in iniquity*; and confine yourſelves to ſuch as really *repent*, or, I ſhould rather ſay, *who appear moſt inclined to learn how to repent*. Thus it is more than probable that this *charity* will exiſt with *dignity* and *honor*, and ſupport ſuch a regard to the ſex, as is moſt conſonant with the *laws of God and nature*. A ſtrict adherence to the great principle of *true penitence*, ſeems to be the only *ſolid ground* on which you can build the hopes of a *laſting eſtabliſhment*; and, I apprehend, it will

will be the ſureſt means of obtaining the favor of our fellow-ſubjects. This will ſubdue the force of every objection; and leave no ſhadow for ſuſpicion, that you will graft an *evil* on the *good*, and convert the *bleſſing* into a *curſe*.

I would not be underſtood to wiſh, that your *zeal* ſhould be circumſcribed within *narrow bounds*; but that I apprehend all collateral conſiderations of utility, in reforming ſuch of the *profligate*, or relieving ſuch of the *wretched*, as do not appear to have any *ſenſe* of their *guilt*, would in the iſſue greatly diminiſh the *dignity* of your *charity*. I ſay this from obſerving, how mankind are apt to forget the original deſign of their own inſtitutions, and *particularly* to become careleſs about the performance of *religious* duties; and your deſign is ſo good, that I hope it will be as carefully guarded *in future times*, as it is at *preſent*, that no object may find admittance who is not, to all appearance at leaſt, inclined to anſwer the true end of the charity.

Upon the principle of *real repentance*, I am perſuaded, *much good* may be done in a *little time*, I mean where there is *radically* a *good diſpoſition*. *Great benefit* may be produced by *habit*, and length of trial, where the diſpoſition is not ſo tractable, and ſuch effects produced to the world, will ſet your charity, in ſuch inſtances, in the *more exalted* point of view; but in general your ſucceſs will depend on the *diſpoſition* of the party, and not the *length of time* you keep them confined. Some who behave well for *one* year, may grow impatient if kept *two*; and *ſeem* to defeat the end of your labors, by your expecting that of them which

is not a neceſſary concomitant to *piety*, or not to ſuch a ſupereminent degree of it as can reaſonably be expected. Beſides, as the number is vaſt, if a *tenth* part of the offenders ſhould aſk relief, it will be a great object to ſuccor them. Accordingly as you diſcover the *means* moſt *effectual* to *animate* the *piety*, and enliven the *induſtry* of thoſe who put themſelves under your protection, you will the more ſpeedily qualify them for both worlds, and reſtore them ſo whole, in mind and body, to their friends and relations, as to merit their favor and protection upon all the principles of religion and humanity.

In this general view I am ſo pierced with conviction of the *propriety* of the inſtitution, that although I do not expect that *every man* ſhould think as I do, I ſhall be ſurprized, if ſo many are not of the *ſame opinion*, that e're long we ſhall ſee ſuch a *uſeful*, and *proper edifice*, for this truly great purpoſe, riſe out of the *zeal* of our fellow-ſubjects, as will rejoice the hearts of all *real chriſtians*; and relieve the *pangs* of many a ſoul, trembling on the verge of *eternity!* — When the ſubject is duly examined, and rightly underſtood: when the practice of all *chriſtian* countries is enquired into; when the deplorable ſtate of many objects, pitiable on every account, but moſt of all for their want of good *parents*, and early education, is *conſidered:* when all theſe concurrent motives are added to the peculiar tenderneſs which characteriſes the *beſt minds*, and falls in with the *experience* of thoſe who know moſt of the miſeries of mankind, it is hardly poſſible but that many will unite in

giving the object *ſtability* and ſupport. If it is likewiſe conſidered, that thoſe who *give*, and thoſe who *receive* the bounty, will be in ſome reſpects in the ſame happy ſituation; without indulging any ſtrain of *enthuſiaſm*, or pretending to any *prophetic* ſpirit, I cannot but entertain ſuch an opinion of the humanity of my fellow-ſubjects, as to believe them capable of ſuch attention to this object.

If you had *money* and *room* ſufficient to make *diviſions* and *ſubdiviſions*, as ſchools of *uſeful induſtry*, abſtracted from the piety of the deſign, *it might be well*; but the laws having already made proviſion in caſes of mere poverty, it is ſuppoſed no one can die with *hunger*. — If pariſh workhouſes were well *regulated*, and properly *attended*, I mean, if they were put on a right footing, much *wickedneſs*, which the *Magdalene houſe* cannot *remove*, might be *prevented*. In this view *county-workhouſes* will be of the higheſt utility, when a proper number of the *poor* is congregated; proper diviſions of them made; all of them uſefully employed, according to their abilities, and a *religious* and *prudential* œconomy obſerved. The great object is to find men of *ſenſe*, *piety*, and *public ſpirit*, to take the charge. For this we may appeal to *fact*, with regard to the *actual* employment of *many poor children*, now at work in ſeveral charity houſes, whoſe parents *did not*, or *could not* employ them. The ſame may be done for *grown perſons*, and we may hope, when the war is ended, this will be one of the firſt objects of *legiſlative* cognizance, as well to *ſuccor* and *relieve* the *poor*, as to enable *individuals* to ſuccor and *relieve* the

the *ſtate*, by decreaſing the *poors rates*. Nor ought our beneficence to be confined: the *poor* and *vagabond* of every kind ſhould be taught how to gain their bread, inſtead of diſtreſſing the honeſt *laborer*, by eating any part of the produce of the ſweat of his brows.

Thus might we *alleviate*, if not *remove*, many cauſes of complaint: preſerve many *lives* which are loſt; and ſet many hands to work which are *idle*.

As friends to the *Magdalene charity* you mean to promote virtue in general; but the immediate road to it is by fixing your attention to *this object*, where your zeal can operate almoſt with a certain effect. As you *place out* the women, who are under your care, for the moſt part in *domeſtic ſervice*, you would wiſh that the piety of families ſhould be reſtored to that purity and ſimplicity, as is beſt calculated to promote the *preſent* and *future* happineſs both of *maſter* and *ſervant*.

In the mean while your equanimity, patience, and *circumſpection* muſt be tried. To lament the deceit of ſome, the ingratitude of others, and to ſhow no other reſentment than ſuch as *virtue* may entertain againſt *vice*, requires the *fortitude* and *moderation* which are eſſential to ſuch an undertaking. It was for want of ſuch a *caſt of thought*, that ſo many ages paſſed without any *attempt* of this kind: the ſame charity which induced you to make the trial, I hope, will now ſupport it; and the ſame *mercy* on which your inſtitution is founded, will ſtill lead you on to *commiſerate* and *alleviate* the ſad effects of that iniquity, which it would be deluſion to imagine you could *totally* remove.

Experience abundantly juſtifies the *belief*, that EVIL *is beſt overcome by* GOOD, in all parts of life. You have ſeen numbers humanized, who ſeemed but a remove from ſavages; and others rendered converts to *chriſtianity*, whoſe *practice* had no correſpondency with it before. It is natural to conclude, from the effects of this charity, that you make as judicious a choice of the objects you receive, as the nature of the caſe will admit. Among the numbers who are ſuppoſed to be *worthy of your pity*, and ſeek for your protection, many are ſtruck with *contrition*; others from learning *decency* in *external behavior*, will become *pure in heart*. And I cannot help concluding, that *many* who will never appear within your walls, will be influenced by this act of piety to be more *ſerious*, and to act more conſiſtently than they would otherwiſe have done. By being ſo much the oftener told, that the *ſin* in queſtion is productive of miſery in the *life to come*, they will be induced to *examine* whether it be not really *ſo declared* by *divine authority*.

The cuſtoms of the world may gloſs over *external appearances*, and the *degree* of iniquity be meaſured by the *outward ſplendor*, or the *miſery* that attends it; but the *firſt* and *greateſt* of mankind, who *ſhould* know their *duty* beſt, *muſt ſurely account as ſtrictly*, and will one day *tremble* as much, for the breach of the divine law, as the meaneſt of mankind; and the ſame for *this*, as for *any other vice*, which is forbidden by that *law*.

I conſider the undertaking with reſpect to its affinity with *religious* and *moral* obligations in *general*, as well as in the *peculiar* inſtance of the *unhappy women* whom you relieve; and

and I think a more ſerious occaſion can hardly offer itſelf to the mind, during the longeſt period of life.

We are apt to compliment each other on a ſuppoſition of *greater virtue* than we poſſeſs; and hence it ariſes that we keep *ſinners* at a diſtance, in proportion as they are *poor*, and *abject*; their ſins *notorious* to the world, or their offences infamous in themſelves; *forgetting* that the *greateſt ſinners* are often reſtored to *virtue*, when *proper means* are employed to this *end*. In whatever proportion virtue prevails, it is not the *leſs virtue* for appearing in *rags*. If we are conſcious of *guilt*, mercy becomes the more a *tribute*. In every caſe we are *debtors* to heaven, and particularly when we are made *inſtruments of mercy* to thoſe who return to their obedience. Were we to mark this offence with the utmoſt *rigor*, ſo far from practiſing *charity*, as the great bond of *union*, the ſtate of *ſociety* would be a *ſtate of war*, and *mercy* might ceaſe to be conſidered as an attribute of the *Deity*.

It has been, though very inadvertently, I think, advanced as a reaſon againſt your charity, that *vice* carries its own *affliction* along with it; and that we *muſt not counteract the order of Providence*, particularly in this inſtance. Do not ſuch arguments prove ſo much, that they prove *nothing*? Do they not rather cut the other way? We might ſay, *that the* GREATER *commiſeration is due to this vice, when we ſee it carry its own affliction along with it, ſince it is thus, the world is kept in awe, from the natural conſequences of evil; and thus mercy opens the door to repentance.* And would we *ſhut* it again when it is open? Whether the contrition which religion inſpires; or the calamities which

which *they* ſuffer, who give themſelves up to this offence, lead the *wretched to ſeek* for ſhelter; the ſhutting up ſuch *avenues* to relief, againſt thoſe who cannot receive any, by other means, is ſo extremely *ſhocking to humanity*, that the heart bleeds at the *reflection*; as on the other hand it ſprings forth with *joy* at the *benignity* of your inſtitution.

It is true, *virtue* has the beſt right to *eſteem* and *veneration*: and *diſtreſs*, created by *iniquity*, has not the ſame kind of claim to ſuccor: nay more, *we muſt neceſſarily leave the* GUILTY *to ſuffer the conſequences of guilt, in many caſes*: but let us not *prove too much*. *Men* are *men*; they are *ſinful creatures*; and ſuch iniquity is as *common*, as the diſtreſſes occaſioned by it; whereas *Innocence* ſupports herſelf and *triumphs* under calamities. And ſuch is the *ſtate of human life*, that *miſery in general* finds employment for more than half the affections of the *heart of man*. Even our natural propenſity to *joy*, finds its chief object in relieving of *ſorrow*. In the mean while every motive to religion and humanity unites to keep our affections in *conſtant exerciſe*. Such is the analogy of *true ſelf-love* and *ſocial virtue*; ſuch the *connexion* between our *preſent* and *future happineſs*, that commiſeration thus exerted, conſtitutes the greateſt part of the *virtue* we aſpire at. It is at once both the *cauſe* and the *effect*: it is *virtue* and *religion*. And for the ſame reaſon, that charity is greater than *faith* or *hope*, it is the moſt *permanent rock* on which the well-being of mankind is built.

By the charity in queſtion, you *feed* the *hungry*, *clothe* the *naked*, *cure* the *ſick*, *inſtruct* the *ignorant*, and render all

all theſe objects *uſeful*. As it extends to a *future ſtate*, it is the conſummation of *all virtues*. Thoſe who are inſtruments in the hands of the Almighty, to recover the miſerable from the ways of *death*, may be ſaid to reach the higheſt ſteps which *poor mortals* can aſcend, in their paſſage to the regions of *bliſs immortal*.

Happy! — *thrice happy* were it for the world, if the opinion of being *thus ſerviceable to mankind* were leſs *notional*, and reduced oftener into *practice*. We might then ſee the *hope of heaven* invigorate our purſuits, and give a *brighter luſtre* to every action of life: and the *fear of hell* ſtartle the moſt *elaborate reaſoner*, and confound the moſt daring offender againſt God. In every view the theme is *glorious*, and affords an ample field for the diſplay of the *pureſt* and the *nobleſt rhetoric*.

With regard to your treatment of theſe objects, as ſome kind of *nakedneſs of mind*, like *nakedneſs of body*, is forbidden by the laws of decency, though it is right to probe the wounds of the ſoul, there is a meaſure, beyond which, they are rendered *leſs* curable. The mind demands relief; it will not be kept always on the ſtretch; thoſe who imagine one cannot be too urgent to awaken a *criminal*, do not conſider what human nature is, nor that the too frequent repetition of paſt *offences*, is apt to turn the brain, or render us indifferent to the *admonition*. Your mediocrity is a proof of your diſtinction; but remember that *private* inſtruction, from a *judicious* miniſter of the goſpel, is full as *neceſſary*, in this caſe, as *public* ſermons.

In

In the mean while, the *very ſight* of ſo many objects at the *public worſhip of God*, ſtrikes an alarm to the heart, and tells the *ſpectator*, in the moſt emphatic terms, "*go* "*and ſin no more*," *leſt you die in your ſins, as theſe women were in the moſt imminent danger of doing.* — In this view alſo the *utility* of the deſign is obvious; for ſcarce any perſon, of either ſex, or any denomination, however comparatively virtuous, can hear a *judicious* and *pathetic* diſcourſe, upon the ſubject of the *neceſſity of repentance in general*, in the preſence of *ſuch objects*, without thinking ſo much the more ſeriouſly of *ſuch neceſſity*.

It is a great pleaſure to hear that *ſome* of the *women*, who were diſcharged many months ſince, without any *recommendations* to the world, and who, from the expreſſion of their *impatience*, did not ſeem to *deſerve* any, have notwithſtanding forſaken their former courſe of life; proving the *force of religious impreſſions* on the mind, at the very time it was ſuppoſed to be vitiated *beyond recovery*. — As to the ſuſpicion that theſe women will go into extremes, and from being *impious* to a proverb, become *ſuperſtitious* or *enthuſiaſtic*, in the ſame degree, it proves nothing; you ſee, when they are properly treated, their native tenderneſs may be wrought upon by *ſincerity* and *judgment*, as well as by *fear* and *blind zeal*.

In common life theſe are the means to promote that influence, which, by the expreſs appointment of nature, the ſexes have on each other; and as men are rendered *bad*, to the higheſt degree of infamy, by *bad women*;

ſo

ſo by the force of *love* and *ſhame*, and the power of *example*, they are rendered *good*, by *good women*. And if *bad ones* do ſo much miſchief, what may not *good ones* do towards reforming the world? It is true, this *influence* can hardly reach very far without the *connexion of wedlock*; whence one may eaſily perceive, how much *religion* depends on this compact, eſpecially in the *prevention* of *impiety*. And it is no leſs obvious, that many of the miſeries under which *we* groan, as a community, in regard to immoral and diſſolute living, are owing to the *neglect of marriage*.

I hope this *deſign* will be one means of checking the growth of *libertiniſm*: it has hitherto viſibly operated, in ſome degree, to this end; and thoſe whoſe hearts are moſt *inclined to wickedneſs*, being pierced with *conviction*, their *prayers* perhaps will find acceſs to heaven through this channel. And may it be *your happineſs*, to be *inſtrumental* in ſaving many ſouls from death! May the great *Father of mercies* aſſiſt your *endevors*, and ſuccor every *real penitent*, that you may give mankind ſuch clear and *ſtriking evidence* of the fruits of *zeal* founded in *knowledge*, as ſhall prove an inſtructive leſſon to a *ſinful world!* Whatever ſchemes of utility we reduce to action; whatever humane or pious thought we purſue, let us be *earneſt* in all *good works*. No *inconveniency*, no *ſuffering* on earth, can be compared to the *glory* which will one day be revealed to us; and upon this principle, no *earthly* object can be terrible in the eye of *reaſon*; whilſt every thing that leads us on, in the

purſuit of that glory, muſt wear a *pleaſing aſpect*. In the mean while, *faith* in the *promiſes* of GOD will rivet our hearts to his *love*, and delight and exalt the mind with the rapturous conſideration of *living for ever*, in thoſe regions, where neither *ſin*, nor *pain*, nor *ſorrow* can poſſibly find any entrance! I am, with the moſt ſincere reſpect,

Your moſt humble,

and moſt obedient ſervant,

Dec. 1761.

J. Hanway.

Some remarks on the ſubjects of this book.

Addreſs to the ingenious reader.

EVERY ſolid teſtimony of *zeal* for an object of importance, and every token of a *ſincere* and *diſintereſted* affection for mankind, ought in all reaſon to beſpeak that *candor* which honeſt minds are ready to beſtow; not upon the principle of *ſcholaſtic criticiſm* on books, but the more *enlarged idea* of benevolence and utility.

You may conſider theſe *thoughts* as a tribute due to *heaven*, for the *good things* which the *author* enjoys on *earth*, and particularly for the *inclination to do good*, and for the *leiſure* which his ſituation affords. The chief end propoſed, is to throw *a mite* into that vaſt treaſure which is appropriated to the *ſecurity* of the *ſoul*; an object about which we often talk familiarly, when we have no *adequate idea of it*.

If the *chriſtian religion* is not a mere tale invented to amuſe the *credulous*: if it is not repugnant to our *ſocial* affections, to ſhow a *particular concern* for thoſe who are in moſt danger of *periſhing*; *then* we may conclude that it is agreeable to every principle of right reaſon, to be *ſolicitous* for the preſervation of thoſe, who, having been involved in any atrocious ſin, and ſenſible of the offence, deſire to make their peace with God. I alſo conceive,

that he who points out to me a way, by which I can do an *eſſential ſervice* to another, does *me* an *eſſential ſervice.*

Among other things, I mean to tell you by what *conveyance* you may remit ſome of your riches to heaven, by *charitable contributions* toward the ſupport of the *Magdalene charity*; for the relief of thoſe, for whoſe immediate uſe it is intended. If a *more intereſting* object, conſidered in all its various relations, ſhould perchance preſent itſelf, you ought to conſider it in the *firſt* place. Weigh all ſuch matters well; and whenever you are doubtful, as to the meaſure of benevolence which humanity or religion require at your hands, reſolve, if you *err*, to do it on the *right* ſide.

We are principally indebted to Mr. *R. Dingley*, who propoſed this beneficent deſign, and Providence has befriended it in the early countenance and protection it received from *two noble Lords* and *three Baronets* *, diſtinguiſhed by their humanity, their clear diſcernment, and juſt ſenſe of religion, with a long liſt of many other perſons, moſt truly diſpoſed to *chriſtian charity:* indeed the undertaking requires a very peculiar *attention.*

If I might hope to do the *profligate* of the inferior claſſes ſome ſervice, I muſt confeſs, I have no leſs a view to *offenders* of a higher rank, who are under the influence of thoſe "*dazling ſpells which cheat the eye with blear illu-*

"*ſions,*

* The Rt. Hon. Earl of *Hertford*, Preſident, the Rt. Hon. Lord *Romney*, Sir *George Savile*, Sir *Alexander Grant*, Sir *Samuel Fludyer*, Baronets, Vice-Preſidents of the *Magdalene charity.*

"*ſions, and give it falſe preſentments.*" When theſe know the author does not wear a *gown*, nor is a *methodiſt*, nor I hope a *fanatic* of any kind, perhaps the title of his book may induce them to caſt an eye on ſome of the pages of it.

Religion is intereſting equally to all, but all kinds of addreſſes do not find a paſſage to every heart. Thoſe who ever received any impreſſions of it will be perſuaded to *think*, if we apply to them in a *proper* manner. There are more of all ranks, quick at *comprehending* what is *right*, than is generally imagined; and many who had originally right notions of *religion*, require their *hearts* to be alarmed, more than their *heads* to be inſtructed: it is *habit* which makes us virtuous or vicious.

I thought the *nature* of this undertaking gave me a warrant to introduce ſeveral moral paſſages from our beſt *poets*. It is by ſuch means *inſtruction* may be moſt eaſily conveyed; for there are many who moſt eaſily retain what they read in *verſe*, particularly the *female* world. Fancy, amongſt them, is ſometimes eſteemed a kind of *characteriſtic*, and it holds a greater ſway in general, than mankind ſeem to be aware of. As juſt, true, and beautiful repreſentations, exalt the ſoul, and brutal images of things debaſe it; the *imagination*, like other faculties of the mind, is *good* or *evil*, according to its object. When POETRY is employed to *great* and *noble* purpoſes, it carries with it a power beyond *common language*: whilſt it delights, it animates with a warmth, which, if on one ſide it borders on *enthuſiaſm*, on the other is beſt calculated

calculated to *elevate* the heart to that pitch, which renders it moſt fit to be offered to the *Deity:* and the moſt exalted part of the trueſt *public worſhip of God* is very much indebted to it.

Whether we conſider the *piety* and *ſublimity* of the ſtyle; the *beauty of the images*, or the *prophetic* ſpirit, who can read ſome paſſages in the *pſalms*, and not feel their force?

" *O Lord God of my ſalvation!*
" *I have cried day and night before thee,*
" *O let my prayer enter into thy preſence.* —
" *Lead me forth in thy truth, and teach me,*
" *For thou art the God of my ſalvation,*
" *In thee hath been my hope all the day long.* —
" *Call to remembrance, O Lord, thy tender mercies,*
" *And thy loving kindneſſes which have been ever of old.*
" *Remember not the ſins and offences of my youth,*
" *But according to thy mercy think upon me.* —
" MERCY *and* TRUTH *are met together.*
" *Righteouſneſs and peace have kiſſed each other.*
" *Truth ſhall floriſh out of the earth,*
" *And Righteouſneſs hath looked down from heaven.*
" *Them that are meek ſhall* HE *guide in judgment;*
" *And ſuch as are gentle, them ſhall he teach his way.*"

What a *glorious* poem might be ſelected without the help of *rhime!* Were the parts of the *Pſalms* not generally *intelligible*, or not directly applicable to our devotion

votion expunged, what remained being properly *repeated*, would afford pleaſure to the *ſtrongeſt* head, the *pureſt* heart, the *livelieſt* imagination! Whilſt enthuſiaſts decry, *reaſon*, and *make war* with it, the time may come when *all of us* will render *all*, and *every part* of our *addreſſes* to heaven, without exception, *ſimple*, *plain*, *intelligible*, and *conſiſtent*, which is more than can be ſaid at preſent.

But the *harmony* of numbers has always an irreſiſtible force to excite attention.

" *For whilſt our thoughts can riſe, and ſoar, and ſhine,*
" *Immortal ſpirit animates each line;*
" *Each with bright flame that fires our ſouls is crown'd,*
" *Each has magnificence of ſound,*
" *And harmony divine!*
" *And man may juſtly, tuneful ſtrains admire,*
" *His ſoul is muſic, and his breaſt a lyre;*
" *Which whilſt its various notes do all agree,*
" *Enjoys the ſweets of its own harmony.*"

Even our *pulſe* beats to *muſic*, when the *animal* part of our frame is not diſturbed by *ſickneſs*, *paſſion*, or *exceſs*. So naturally are we pleaſed with whatever ſtrikes us with the idea of *beauty* and *order*, that thoſe who are leaſt poſſeſſed of the powers of *reaſoning*, are *ſenſible* of the force of numbers; witneſs the *rude lines* of many an *untaught hind*, even on that ſerious ſpot where *mortality* keeps his peculiar reſidence.

Divines

Divines in their regular diſcourſes, are not allowed the ſame kind of liberty as I have taken; but they quote from much higher authority. And conſidering how admirably every ſubject in divinity is treated by ſome of our clergy, and how *pure*, *elegant*, and *harmonious* their language is, *their writings* are entitled to pre-eminence beyond all *mere human compoſitions*. If ſound divinity were the faſhionable reading, ſo many would not be negligent of their duty; nor ſuch crowds run after *novelty*. *Quacks* in pulpits, like *mountebanks* on ſtages, would not ſo eaſily draw a mob together, nor pretend to adminiſter cures for all the maladies of the ſoul, on ſuch terms as they give out.

The *learned reaſoner* ſometimes endevors to accommodate religion to his *corruption*; but the *illiterate* are *apt* to *ſwallow* down abſurdities. In the mean while, the *metaphyſical enthuſiaſt*, falling in love with his own *fancies*, extols their beauties, and captivates the hearts of the vulgar with imaginary exiſtences. One may as well tell any man, that a *woman* whom he paſſionately loves, is *falſe* to him, or that ſhe lies abominably through mere *arrogance*, *vanity*, or *levity*, as ſoberly repreſent to ſuch perſon, that he has miſtaken *falſhood* for *truth*, with reſpect to the diſtinction of his *own imaginations*, *and the Holy Spirit of God*.

Thus whilſt ſome are emerging out of ignorance, others plunge into it, inſomuch that the errors of the *papiſts* do not appear more irreconcileable with *genuine chriſtianity*, than thoſe of the *Methodiſts*, notwithſtanding it

it is held treaſonable againſt the ſtate, to teach the tenets of the former, in the ſame public manner as the latter propagate theirs. I know that the *Methodiſts*, in the eſteem of many ſenſible perſons, are below notice: but I alſo know, that ſeveral ingenious men have thought proper to employ their pens, with a view to undeceive the *innocent* and *unwary*; and the miſchiefs which *methodiſtical* doctrines may introduce, can never be a ſubject of *indifference*.

There are ſome general rules which ſeem to be eſſential to RATIONALITY, as well as to CHRISTIANITY, namely.

1. *That reaſon, duly exerciſed, limits its own object, and can be the only judge of religious actions.*

2. *That the ſcriptures are a ſufficient rule to direct us in religion, and that they are conſiſtent with themſelves.*

3. *That the evidence, contained in the ſcriptures, is ſufficient to make men religious.*

4. *That religion conſiſts chiefly in keeping the commandments, or obſerving the law delivered to us by the ſupreme Lord and ſovereign Legiſlator.*

5. *That every man will finally receive according to his* WORKS.

6. *That the love of the world, as generally underſtood, is not conſiſtent with the love of God: — though the love of God cannot exiſt without charity, which is the love of man.*

7. *That uprightneſs is our greateſt ſecurity, and a virtuous life (which is alſo called holineſs) is the moſt acceptable ſacrifice we can make to God.*

8. *That man, as a free agent, is not the leſs accountable for his thoughts, words and actions, becauſe he cannot poſſibly pretend to any merit from the beſt of them, he being ſinful in his very make and conſtitution, as well as an actual ſinner.*

9. *That he is not the leſs encouraged to be virtuous on that account, ſeeing that it is equally certain, that he is a free agent, and that the merits of Chriſt will compenſate for his want of merit (ſuppoſing him virtuous, and ſpeaking of him as a Being by nature ſinful) to the ſame glorious end, as if the Almighty had given him a power to be meritorious, and to plead that merit; ſince it would ſtill be equally difficult to judge of the degree of that merit; and by no means conſiſtent, with ſuch ſinfulneſs, to challenge his* MAKER *on the principle of a* TITLE *to a happy immortality.*

10. *Conſequently, all conteſts on the ſubject of man's merit, ought to be reſolved into that of his religious humility, which conſiſts in a habit of mind, the very reverſe of that diſpoſition, which is underſtood by the words, vanity, pride, boaſting of merit, and ſelf-applauſe.*

11. *That to boaſt of the merits of Chriſt, as oppoſed to our own demerit, and this to a degree of arrogance and preſumption, by no means conſiſtent with chriſtian humiliation of ſoul, is being* PROUD *of humility, or talking abſolute nonſenſe.*

To go beyond this ſeems to be only diſtracting our underſtandings with diſtinctions, which are not intelligible; and creating a *neglect of a virtuous life*, as if it was ſuppoſed that the *merits of Chriſt* will be ſubſtituted in the place of ſuch *neglect*, inſtead of *ſuch merits* ſupplying *our*

DEFECTS,

DEFECTS, *after we have exerted our utmoſt endevors to do our duty.* The fanatical and *viſionary pietiſt* having firſt reſolved to exclude *reaſon*, would deſtroy the efficacy of his *own virtue:* and by an *irrational* miſconſtruction of the duty of renouncing all pretenſions to *merit* in himſelf, confound the idea of the very thing, without which he could not be an *accountable Being.*

A ſearch after *truth*, joined to the motives of *public love*, and a diſpoſition to *think* and *write*, induced me thus far to examine the pretenſions of the *Methodiſts.* You will judge if I have treated them properly: I am ſure I have not *diſguiſed my opinion*, and I love an *honeſt man*, whether he be a *Methodiſt*, or a *Papiſt*, a *Jew*, or a *Mahommedan*, but I wiſh they were all *true chriſtians*; and I would have no man pretend to be what he is not, or *inſult* the world with vain *pretenſions.*

I have adventured more boldly in another inſtance. Addreſſes to heaven *in form of meditations* and *prayers*, require ſomething more than a warm heart. I find the exerciſe of the pen, in this way, is ſo far advantageous to the *writer*, that as he can hardly commit his thoughts to paper without feeling his ſubject, neither can he, at any diſtant time, view with *indifference*, the picture of his own mind, whatever attitude he may place it in. With regard to his *readers*, he may hope, in a variety of circumſtances, to reach the hearts of *ſome* of them: and care is taken to make theſe *meditations* more brief, as well as more *free* and *energic*, than in moſt books of

devotion. They are founded on the great principle of *gratitude* for mercies paſt, and *hope* of mercies and *happineſs* to come. That *God* is the *tender parent* of mankind, as well as the *tremendous judge*; and as *reaſon*, and the teſtimony of our *ſenſes*, are our *preſent* guides, and this world is the ſcene of trial for the *next*, the ſame evidence will lead us to *ſee* and *comprehend* ſo much as is neceſſary to *faith*, and the things which belong to a *future* ſtate; and to adore God in his government, both in the intellectual and material world.

Let us turn our thoughts a thouſand different ways; whatever rational method we take to promote virtue, a fair view of *life*, and a near proſpect of all the duties of a *chriſtian*, preſent themſelves to thoſe who are in their *right minds*, free from *prejudices*, and *attentive* to what the *common ſenſe* of mankind univerſally acquieſces in. *Gentleneſs* and *moderation* in all *purſuits* and *enjoyments* are eſſential: this, in the language of the poet, is *taſting the honey, without wounding the flower*. There is a certain *mediocrity in all things*, which conſtitutes the *eſſence of virtue*; for it is evident that our *powers* are limited, and that all *extremes* tend to *weakneſs* or *diſtraction* in *thought*, in *word*, or in *deed*.

With reſpect to *letter-writing*, I am as ſenſible as you can be, that there is a *grace* and *elegancy*, an eaſy flow of ſentiment, and turn of expreſſion, which characterizes polite epiſtles; but this is a gift which every one does not poſſeſs. When the ſubject is *argumentative* or *admonitory*, and

and the occaſion *real*, leſs is expected; and as I ſhould judge for another, the defects more pardonable, *taſte* not being ſo much concerned as the moral ſenſe of *good* and *evil*. Upon the whole, there ſeems to be no ſufficient reaſon to ſuppreſs an inclination to *do good* in this way, on account of ſuch *conſcious imperfections*. At the ſame time, I as little expect that a careleſs perſon, or a libertine, whilſt he continues ſuch, will read my thoughts with candor, attention, and reliſh, as that a pious man, without any knowledge of algebra, ſhould peruſe Euclid's elements with pleaſure and improvement. And ſince it has pleaſed Divine Providence, amidſt a variety of deſigns, calculated for the promotion of the great cauſe of humanity, that a ſhare in one intended to reſtore the moſt abandoned to a ſenſe of virtue, falls to my lot, I will diſcharge my part with my beſt abilities. I am firmly perſuaded, that I ſhall, in ſome degree at leaſt, promote the fear of God, and aſſiſt in reſtoring many wretched Beings to health and comfort, and ſo far do ſervice to my country, and conſequently to my own ſoul.

The improvement of the mind, as derived from time and obſervation, is of very little worth, unleſs it renders men more zealous, more compaſſionate to their fellow-creatures, and teaches them, in *advanced life*, to expreſs their tenderneſs for women, who are nearly *one half of the ſpecies*, in the way moſt conſiſtent with the correction of their own affections. This muſt ever be the caſe, unleſs in inſtances where the heart is ſo much depraved as to render

render all commerce with the world dangerous. — In the mean while, the obligation to piety is eternal and *immutable*, not confined to *age* or *ſex*, nor limited to *rank* or *fortune*.

Before I conclude, I muſt inform you, that when you meet with *references to Vol.* 1. you are to paſs them over as of no ſignification. The *firſt publication* of this work was in *two Volumes* conjointly, but it being of a *miſcellaneous* kind they are now divided. The deſign of the alteration is to promote the ſervice of thoſe for whom theſe *letters* were principally intended, and render the purchaſe of the book more eaſy than it was before. I am, very truly,



Yours,

Dec. 1761.

J. H.



THE CHARACTER OF *MARY MAGDALANE.*

LETTER I.

To A. B.

SIR,

I Received your very learned and* obliging letter, in which you have quoted many authorities, to prove that *Mary Magdalane* was not a *harlot.*—I muſt confeſs, I was once of the common opinion, that this lady had been guilty of incontinency, but I was ſoon after corrected. She was certainly a lady of high rank and condition, and diſtinguiſhed for her *fortune* as well as *nobility*, her education may therefore be ſuppoſed ſuperior to that of any of the women who were the followers of our *Saviour*; and though ſhe might not exceed them in *piety*, her *contrition* for the errors of her life, and her *gratitude* for the *miraculous* cure of the moſt *deplorable diſeaſe*, with her

* The letter, to which the above is an anſwer, was printed for *J. Noon.*

her liberality in adminiſtring to the wants of others, are clearly handed down to poſterity, with the higheſt marks of applauſe. Thus it is eaſy to reconcile her being conſidered, by the *Romaniſts*, as the *patroneſs of penitents*, as ſhe is by us, an *eminent* example of piety. In after-ages the world might eaſily confound great holineſs with diſtinguiſhed *penitence*, and the common *ſins* and *infirmities* of her life might be blended with the imputation of *incontinency*; notwithſtanding there are many *ſinners*, in the female world, who are not *harlots*, nor guilty of *adultery* or *fornication*. And indeed, why this lady ſhould be *ſuppoſed* to have violated the divine law in this inſtance, becauſe there were others of the ſame name of *Mary*, or becauſe *ſeven devils* had been caſt out of her, is not to be reconciled upon any other principle than our inattention to *time* and *place*, and our ignorance of the nature of the diſeaſe: for it is reaſonable to preſume, that the diſeaſe itſelf was an impediment; and moreover, if it cannot be clearly traced out that ſhe was a *harlot*, we ought to conclude ſhe *was not one*. As to the vulgar notion, that a *female ſinner* implys a *proſtitute*, it proves nothing.

But I apprehend, Sir, you need not be alarmed on account of naming the houſe of penitents, the *Magdalane houſe*: you ſee that it affords occaſion for *vindicating* the reputation of the *lady*, ſuppoſing her to have been innocent; and it may poſſibly *correct* the vulgar opinion, inſtead of *confirming* it. And whether ſhe was a ſinner in this way, or in any other, ſhe ſtands ſo much the more on record, as an example of great *contrition* and *piety*,

not

not as a *harlot*. St. *Luke* having been a *phyſician*, as well as an *evangeliſt*, the hoſpital for *lunatics*, in this city, is dedicated to him; but poſterity will not therefore imagine that St. *Luke* was not in his *right mind*. But if the *penitent proſtitutes* in *Preſcot-ſtreet* ſhould, on account of any erroneous opinion concerning *Mary Magdalane*, happily imitate the *gratitude* and *contrition* for which this excellent lady is renowned, if ſhe was to reviſit this *bad world*, ſhe would be *pleaſed*, rather than *offended*, and, with the true ſpirit of holineſs, ſmile with joy, at the miſtake. But you ſay, we had better not dedicate this houſe to any *ſaint*: be pleaſed to take notice, that *we* have not canonized *Mary Magdalane*. — It is only plain *Magdalane Houſe*.

As to your complaint, that the term *penitent proſtitute* is too *harſh*; though I find in myſelf no kind of inclination to *inſult* the meaneſt creature upon earth, eſpecially of the *female ſex*, yet I muſt confeſs, that I think a public inſtitution, calculated to promote ſo important an end as the *repentance of ſuch ſinners*, the firſt ſtep neceſſary is to give the offender a right ſenſe of her condition. This cannot be ſo eaſily done by calling guilt by a *ſoft* name, as by a *true* one: beſides, the term *proſtitute* is the politeſt, for the idea we mean to convey; and ſhe who is really *penitent* will not be the leſs ſo for being mentioned as ſuch, not with any aggravation, but ſimply as a proper name: and granting, that ſeveral who take refuge in the houſe, have not been *common*, the nature of the inſtitution will hardly admit of the diſtinction. Indeed ſeveral of the young

women who have been received, their circumſtances challenge more attention than the world is aware of; yet I hear of no complaints about the word *proſtitute*.

Let us rather think of the *ſubſtance*, than of the *names* of things. I can with great pleaſure aſſure you, that this charity, though it was long conſidered as a romantic ſcheme, is already productive of great good; and many a poor girl is now qualified as a good citizen and ſubject, who would have been the cauſe of great *miſchief* to ſociety; and from ſeeing nothing before her own eyes but guilt and *perdition*, is now happy in *innocence*, and the hopes of *heaven*.

It is eaſy to conceive, that even a *few months* retreat may be a means of reconciling many *parents* and *friends* to offenders, as well as teaching them the way to heaven. And when *no other* ſuccor on earth can be expected, that which is afforded by the *promoters* of the *Magdalane Charity*, muſt ſtand in as *honorable* eſteem, and as glorious to be *imitated*, as the character of the lady for which you are ſo piouſly jealous. I am, with great reſpect,

Sir,

Oct. 10. 1758. *Your moſt humble Servant.*

The practice of other nations, with regard to houſes for the reception of Penitent Proſtitutes.

LETTER II.

To the Right Hon. ——

I Grant your *Lordſhip's* obſervation to be very juſt, that ſcarce a day paſſes but ſome choice ſpirit amongſt us gives birth to a ſcheme for the *public good:* happy nation where men of ſuch diſpoſitions are found! When theſe ſchemes carry with them any probable proofs of their being really for the *public good*, it would be a national reproach not to countenance them. But we muſt not be ſurprized that many propoſals made to the public, are ſo unfit to bear the *light*, that they die before the ſun ſets on them.

Such is not the caſe of the *Magdalane Charity*, nor is the *undertaking* ſo *new* as your *Lordſhip* ſeems to imagine. I have turned over ſome *volumes* on the ſubject, and made ſeveral *enquiries*, and I find the ſame thing has been adopted by almoſt every chriſtian country in the world. It has been thought of very often, and very *ſeriouſly* by many of our fellow-ſubjects: but we are now more particularly indebted to Mr. *R. Dingley*; this gentleman mentioned it to me eight years ago, as an object

ject he had much at heart, and waited an opportunity to carry it into execution, and he has given the higheſt proof of zeal on this intereſting occaſion.

Obſerving how ſucceſsful the *Marine Society* had been in providing for ſo many *vagabond boys* throughout the three kingdoms, it was natural for any man to turn his thoughts to *girls* of the ſame ſtamp; but this did not appear to me equally practicable. I once conſulted our friend the *biſhop of Worceſter*, always benevolent and active in promoting the *public welfare*, but his lordſhip ſtarted many difficulties. We have now ſeen what zeal and *attention* can do, by the diſtreſſed young girls provided for at the *aſylum*: this, I conceive to be an excellent model for a well-regulated houſe, for the female poor, in their ſtate of *childhood*, ſo far as it goes. *Happy* thoſe who can ſay, were it only in a ſingle inſtance, "*I have ſaved a family from penury, infamy, and perdition, by a well-timed private charity*;" *that* is the moſt eſſential trial of *this* kind of virtue; and thoſe only who have experienced the joy, can tell how ſincere the pleaſure is, of lifting up thoſe who are fallen, and ſuch as are deſirous to help themſelves in an honeſt way of living; or preventing thoſe from ſinking into the depths of miſery, on whom the hand of affliction has been heavy.

As to a *public* place, where all *young beggars*, as well as thoſe advanced in life, might be received and employed, I know but of *one*: it is the *London workhouſe*. If the *directors* of it would enlarge their bottom, extend their ideas,

ideas, and ſolicit an effectual ſupport; it might anſwer all the purpoſes which the moſt humane can expect, or the moſt pious wiſh for and deſire.

With reſpect to thoſe who have already gone aſtray, (and many thouſands will go in ſpite of all our attempts to the contrary) we may ſay of the *Magdalane Charity*, that *faith and good works have walked hand in hand*, with regard to both worlds. This object muſt, from the very nature of things, be of great benefit to ſociety, if it is properly conducted; and experience abundantly confirms this belief.

It is true, *my Lord*, that all nations have ſomething peculiar to themſelves: their *genius*, their *laws*, their *religion*, create a great difference in their *manners* and *cuſtoms*; and hence it is obvious, that an eſtabliſhment which is very conſiſtent in one country, may be abſurd in another. But human nature is the ſame; the propenſity to *ſenſual* gratifications differs very little, and therefore it is no wonder that there ſhould be ſome points in which all nations agree. With regard to the duties of *humanity*, we ſee that the moſt barbarous people, whoſe notions of the *deity* are dark and perplexed, ſtill think it their duty to preſerve their *fellow-creatures*, unleſs there appear reaſons for *deſtroying* any of them, and theſe reaſons are generally founded in the firſt law of nature, *ſelf-preſervation*. In all *free* and *civilized ſtates*, the firſt principle is, *ſave your neighbor, if he has not forfeited his life to the laws, and you ſave yourſelf*. But if we go further, we may ſay, *if we ſuffer thoſe to periſh, whom it is in our*

 power

power to preſerve, it is next in order to the actual deſtroying of them: and it is beyond all doubt that *many thouſands*, in the courſe of time, have periſhed, in conſequence of the opinion, that it is *impoſſible* to *reclaim* a *female proſtitute*; not conſidering that the *degrees* of ſin in this article are almoſt as numerous as the *ſinners:* and though they are all *criminal*, they are very far from being all *irreclaimable*. Mankind in general are guilty of many other offences againſt God, and the laws of their country, which ſeem as difficult to cure, as this of female proſtitutes: and what ſhould we ſay if it were proved, that to one *female*, there are a dozen *male* proſtitutes, who *never* think at all of accounting for *ſuch ſins*.

The *chriſtian* world is diſtinguiſhed by the moſt extenſive *benevolence*, at the ſame time that the *religion of Chriſt* enjoins a ſtricter *purity*, than is known under any other *faith*. The *parabolical* ſtory of the *good Samaritan*, which ſtands upon ſuch honorable record, leads us to the trueſt knowledge of the obligations to charity. The *traveller* was fallen among *thieves:* he was not queſtioned if his own indiſcretion was the cauſe of it; he was *grievouſly wounded*, and in danger of *periſhing*, therefore this *good man*, though a ſtranger, thought it his duty to relieve him. No difference in *manners*, *faith*, or *country*; no opinions in *politics*, influenced his conduct, it was enough that the traveller was a *man*, and in *diſtreſs*.

But, *my Lord*, when we conſider what the practice of other chriſtians is, in behalf of ſuch *proſtitutes* as are inclined to repent of their ſins, though we think ourſelves much

much *wiſer* than other nations, we are many centuries behind ſeveral of them. Motives of *policy*, as well as a ſenſe of *moral* and *religious* obligation, have erected many inſtitutions of this kind, which have been ſupported by ſome of the greateſt, and nobleſt minded perſons of both ſexes, in *Italy*, *France*, *Spain*, the *United Provinces*, and ſeveral other countries.

In *Holland* they have ſuch an eſtabliſhment, differing from the others, for it is not of the *monaſtic* kind, but there are ſome circumſtances relating to the conduct of it, which by no means recommend it as a model to us. In *Amſterdam*, *Rotterdam*, and other cities, there are many houſes of *labor*: the *Dutch* know well how to employ the *profligate* as well as the *poor*. One of theſe houſes, is called the *Spinhuys*. Here the women work, and are cloſely watched. In a year or two, their faces, by the natural change of inhabitants in that country, are frequently forgotten as *proſtitutes*; and when they have a mind to go out, if they have obtained a character for *ſobriety* and *induſtry*, it is eſteemed a recommendation. Once a year, at their *annual fair*, they walk in a kind of gallery, and appear as ſervants do at a ſtatute-fair, in the different counties of *England*. Sailors juſt landed, and who have neither time nor inclination for very long courtſhip, often marry them, the *magiſtrates* giving their conſent; and many perſons, from *proſtitutes*, have been rendered very good ſubjects: and

there are many inſtances of men, who have gloried in thus ſaving the unfortunate. In this houſe people are permitted to ſee the *women* for *money*, but it is under the eye of the maſter and overſeer of the houſe. Here parents find out their daughters again, whereas with us, in this metropolis, the changing names, and places of abode, renders it almoſt impoſſible, and many a poor girl *dies in an hoſpital, or a priſon*, at the very inſtant that her friends are in ſearch of her, and willing to take her to their home.

This inſtitution in *Amſterdam* has exiſted ever ſince 1596, when the houſe was built by the *Regency*. Many who were *beggars*, or lived in *ſtews*, were then put in here, and maintained at the expence of the city. The ſenſe of the inſcription over the door is, *Do not fear: I revenge myſelf not of the* EVIL, *but I compel them to do good. My hand is ſevere, but my heart is friendly.*

There is alſo the *Verbeetering huys* or Reformatory: in this building are ſhut up *different kinds of people*, in different apartments; ſome to be puniſhed *corporally* for their offences; ſome only ſimply ſet to work for their *debaucheries*. In all theſe places the *Bible* is read to them whilſt they are at work; they alſo *ſing pſalms* and *ſpiritual ſongs*, and other means are uſed to eſtrange them from *vice*, and encourage them in *virtue*. Here are other private apartments, where young women, and young *men* alſo, who are viciouſly inclined, are occaſionally ſhut up, ſeparately, at the requeſt of their parents, till

ſuch

ſuch time as they ſhew tokens of repentance. I mention theſe particulars, not ſo much as a means proper for us in this *free* country, to chaſtiſe the *turbulent* and *vicious*, as a practice adopted by a people, famed for *good diſcipline*, and *once renowned in arms*.

There is an *order* of *penitents* at *Marſeilles*, eſtabliſhed ſo long ſince as the year 1272, with a view to engage women, who had proſtituted their perſons, to return to virtue. In 1452 there was a foundation of the ſame kind erected at *Metz*. At *Naples* there was an order eſtabliſhed in 1314 (or as ſome writers mention, in 1324) for harlots, under the name of *Magdalanes*. — About the *fifteenth* century, there was another eſtaliſhment of the ſame kind, commenced at *Paris*, for thoſe unhappy women who, languiſhing under the *crime of proſtitution*, *deſired* to devote themſelves to heaven, and atone for their miſdeeds. Among others I find this remarkable circumſtance, that none were to be received after *thirty-five* years of age. This order was branched out, and we ſee, ſoon after, there were *Magdalanes*, and *Magdelanettes*, at *Rouen* and *Bourdeaux*, being convents to receive theſe kind of ſinners, and *four* nuns, of one of the firſt orders at *Paris*, were employed to regulate the conduct of theſe penitents. This proved a laborious taſk, and theſe nuns were relieved from time to time. In theſe places it was prohibited, under pain of excommunication, to receive any but real harlots. Beſides theſe there are ſeveral other inſtitutions in *France* of the ſame kind.

Another order was founded at *Seville*, in 1550, for ſuch women as had followed a licentious life, and, being touched with remorſe, were become penitents. In *New Spain* they have a diſcipline of the ſame nature. The biſhop of the dioceſe makes his circuit annually: if he finds any woman of public ill-fame, he baniſhes her to ſome diſtance, in hopes of reclaiming her. If ſhe perſiſts, the next year he ſends her to ſome place more remote. If ſhe ſtill purſues her evil courſe of life, the *third* year ſhe is ſhut up in a *penitential houſe*; where, according to the nature of her offences, if ſhe will *eat*, ſhe muſt *work*. She is here confined for a year or longer time, unleſs ſhe finds a huſband, which theſe kind of women often do, men who are inclined to perform an extraordinary penance for ſome capital offence againſt God, hoping to make atonement by ſuch marriages.

In *Rome*, a convent of this ſort was eſtabliſhed ſo long ſince as 626, dedicated to *Mary Magdalane*, who is conſidered as the patroneſs of *penitents*. Pope *Leo* X. afterwards confirmed the ſame. *Clement* VIII. ordered, that all the effects of public or private harlots, who died inteſtate, ſhould devolve to this monaſtery; or, if they made a *will*, it ſhould be null, unleſs they bequeathed a *fifth part* of their goods, to this inſtitution. — There are charities of this kind in almoſt every city in *Italy*. In ſome of theſe *retreats* there are of *three* diſtinctions; *one* of St. *Magdalane*, who make *vows*; *one* of St. *Martha*, who

who are not admitted to make *vows*; and *one* of St. *Lazarus*, who are detained by force.

Thus we ſee what the practice of *chriſtians* has long been in *popiſh* countries. Thank heaven we know, that the *parade* of *papal* vanity is the produce of *ignorance* and *ſuperſtition*: but humanity and the *tenderneſs* which the wiſe and benignant author of nature has implanted in the human breaſt, is common to all. Nor does this *paſſion*, for ſo we may juſtly call *compaſſion*, predominate leaſt in thoſe, whoſe *imaginations* are the moſt *chaſtiſed*, or in whom the deceptions of *fancy* are beſt underſtood: on the contrary, we find that the moſt vicious, or thoſe whoſe *paſſions*, in general, are the *leaſt tamed*, have alſo the *leaſt ſenſe* of the *miſeries* their vices create. This is clearly evinced by the conduct of too many *men*, with regard to *women*, in the inſtance of *illegal commerce*. I find that LADIES of *virtue*, *fortune* and *diſtinction* have had the greateſt ſhare in theſe eſtabliſhments abroad; whereas, *with us*, there ſeems to be *one common ſpirit of benignity in both ſexes*.

It is one of the abſurd tenets of the *Romiſh* church, to engage people to make *vows*, and to ſhut them *entirely* from the world, whether their *hearts* ſubſcribe to ſuch ſecluſion or not; but this is not the caſe in all inſtances, even with that church, as appears from what I have mentioned above; and it cannot be the leſs agreeable to the purity of *genuine chriſtianity*, nor the leſs conſiſtent with the *wiſeſt policy*, to afford unhappy women a *temporary voluntary retreat*, where *piety* may be ſupported by *labor*, and where the *united force of both* will qualify them effectually for

both worlds. With us no *incenſe* will be offered, but the *pure flames* of devotion; nor will *any vows* be required: it may be hoped, indeed, the women will be inſpired with a *reſolution* to die, rather than abandon *virtue*, to which they profeſs themſelves *votaries*.

Your lordſhip will eaſily conceive, that many will learn the principles of the *chriſtian religion*, who knew nothing of them *before*, and conſequently when they return into the world, they will have additional motives to ſhun *temptation*, as well as *experience* to avoid it, however diſguiſed under *ſpecious* appearances. By this means they may do *honor to* human nature, inſtead of *diſgracing* it: they may learn how to provide for their *lives*; and when *death* comes, look forward with *joyful hopes* of the *happineſs* beyond the grave.

It is obvious what the common ſenſe of mankind has been, in regard to the *means of repentance* afforded for this kind of violation of the *chriſtian* law. Nor muſt we ſuppoſe theſe nations do not know what they are about: they invite thoſe to repentance, who are inclined to *repent*, and thoſe that are not inclined, they lay under *reſtrictions*, that as little *miſchief* as poſſible may be done by them. Upon this principle, in ſome of thoſe very countries where ſuch indulgence is ſhewn, they have eſtabliſhed a *police* in relation to *harlots*. It has been a received notion amongſt us, that in *Rome*, and ſeveral other places, theſe women are *licenſed*, or tolerated; and it is true, they are under *regulations*, as a part of the *police* but not in the *manner* as is generally apprehended.

When

When a woman is detected, or known to live in this ſtate of licentiouſneſs, ſhe is ſummoned before a *magiſtrate*, who declares the reaſon of it in theſe terms: *You are impeached of being guilty of proſtitution, and of making a trade of it. If you are inclined to repent, you may be received into the houſe of penitents,* * *where you will be properly employed, and taken good care of. If you will not accept of this offer, and are detected again, you muſt enter your name at the public regiſter, as a proſtitute, and be ſubject to the following regulations, for the breach of which you will be ſeverely chaſtiſed.*

1ſt. *You ſhall not appear on any account, except in a certain diſtrict* †.

2dly. *You ſhall not refuſe any man who may aſk you, except on ſundays or holidays; it muſt not be before ſuch an hour, nor after ſuch an hour* ‡.

3dly. *If you live on the ground floor, you are to take but one ſhilling; on the firſt floor one ſhilling and ſixpence; and on the ſecond you may take two ſhillings* ‖.

4thly. *You are to receive but one man at a time to your apartment, under ſevere penalties, which will be exacted of you, upon information.*

5thly. *You are not entitled to receive any benefit, from any hoſpital or pariſh.*

6thly. *You have no right to appeal to juſtice for any inſult, or debt, acts of cruelty excepted.*

7thly.

* *Le Convertite.* † Places mentioned. ‡ Hours mentioned. ‖ About this value: the *Italian* houſes differ from ours, as to the eſtimation of different floors.

7thly. *Your oath ſhall not be valid, except in caſe of robbery or murder.*

8thly. *You are not entitled to any aſylum hereafter, except to be received to hard labor.*

9thly. *You are to be ſubject to ſuch future laws and regulations, as may be hereafter made for the incorrigible:* and

Laſtly, *You are not entitled to chriſtian burial.*

Some of theſe would be thought hard terms, even for a proſtitute, in a free country; though according to the terms of our creed, a perſon dying in a ſtate of *premeditated profeſſed proſtitution*, ſeems to forfeit a title to *chriſtian burial.* Can the *burial ſervice* be read over ſuch a body? *Our dearly beloved ſiſter departed in ſure and certain hope of a bleſſed reſurrection*, may perchance be conſidered as *mockery.*

I do not venture to tell your *Lordſhip*, that the *Italians* adhere ſtrictly to all theſe rules; they are too partial to the vicious part of the ſex; and their diſcipline is ſo much relaxed, that *common proſtitutes* are to be found in almoſt every part of the great cities in *Italy*, and the *Venetian* territory; but what I have related appears to be the light in which their *civil* and *eccleſiaſtical* laws, and their *common ſenſe of chriſtianity*, have placed *common proſtitutes.* I am, with ſincere reſpect, &c.

The inefficacy of laws to prevent unlawful commerce.

LETTER III.

To the ſame.

I Am very ſenſible, *my Lord*, that ſome of the cuſtoms of the *Hollanders* are by no means conſiſtent with the purity and ſimplicity of our plan. As to their ſhowing the women in the *Spinhuys* in *Amſterdam*, either *for* money or *without*, it is a circumſtance inconſiſtent with the nature of ſuch an inſtitution as ours, in *London*. And as for uſing corporal puniſhments for thoſe who are turbulent, it is as contrary to a voluntary confinement, as *compulſive* meaſures would be inconſiſtent with *real penitence*.

Though the countenancing of fornication may be eſteemed a *political evil* in *Holland*, and the *Dutch* may give liberties to their *Speel huiſen* or muſic houſes, as ſo many rendezvouſes of harlots, we exceed them in the appearance of common women in the open ſtreets: and they are ſtricter in reſpect to *married men*, for theſe are ſubject to be ſeverely *fined* by the *Lieutenant of the police*, if taken in ſuch offences. The *Hollanders* ſeem to be much more phlegmatic than we are: if it is true, that they are much greater *ſenſualiſts* in this reſpect, the queſtion may be aſked, Is not this occaſioned by the indulgence of their *muſic houſes?* Whether it ariſes from this cauſe, or from there

there being ſo many ſeafaring men; or from the common people being leſs ſuſceptible of *fear* or *hope* of any thing that may happen *hereafter*, I know not. This, however, I muſt remark, that although the *Spaniards* were once their maſters, they have forgotten a *Spaniſh* proverb; "*La muger compueſta, a ſu marido, quita de puerta agena.*" "A clean well-dreſſed wife draws her huſband from an-"other woman's door." Harlots in all countries underſtand the ſecret of an elegant appearance. Though innocent in themſelves, the *milliner* and the *mantua maker* often promote *incontinency* among a *certain claſs*, almoſt as much as the *cook* and the *vintner*; and perhaps the careleſſneſs of the *Dutch* wives, in regard to their perſons, may be one cauſe of this kind of profligacy. Be this as it may, I could never comprehend how any *chriſtian legiſlators* could interfere to give countenance to whoredom.

Adultery and *fornication* are ſubject to *penances* in the *Romiſh* church; but the diſtinction ſhe makes of *venial* and *mortal* ſins, affords a greater latitude for ſuch offences among the *papiſts*, than with us: for theſe very penances, which are to atone for ſins, are, I believe, one cauſe of the frequent repetition of them: and I would venture a round ſum upon *Portugal* againſt *Holland*, that the former goes fartheſt in the vice in queſtion. The reaſon is plain: the firſt finds a *ſalvo* for the ſoul; the laſt only connives at the gratification of the appetite, and leaves the party to make up his account with heaven. How men can reconcile the making a law to *permit*, under any modi-

modifications, *that* which GOD has made a law to *forbid*, is what I have no conception of. All ſpeculations with regard to *legal* permiſſions of this kind, ſeem to be a kind of *jeu d'eſprit*, which is ſometimes played off, in oppoſition to thoſe ſanguine *pietiſts*, who in the exuberancy of their zeal, flatter themſelves into a belief, that the reign of the *ſaints* will be reſtored; and the ſin of fornication become as rare, and eſteemed as criminal as *murder*.

It has been often ſaid, that we ought to confine *proſtitutes* to particular ſtreets in *London* and *Weſtminſter*: this might ſtill imply a *legal* permiſſion, and be conſtrued as countenancing of harlots in *ſuch* ſtreets. To attempt to hunt them out of the land, would be extravagant; but to drive them out of the moſt public ſtreets may be eſteemed as a neceſſary part of *police*. We ſee they are often hunted out, for a night or two, and then they take their *ſtands*, and their *walks* as uſual.

With reſpect to the countenance of the muſic houſes in *Holland*, how many *taverns*, *bagnios*, and other places have we, which though ſubject to be viſited, and all evil practices chaſtiſed, yet in fact furniſh as great a *choice* as the *muſic-houſes*, and they are but ſeldom interrupted. On the other hand, it has been well remarked, that "it requires ſome advance in wickedneſs, for a young man to go *publicly* to places where many eyes are upon him; whereas the moſt modeſt and beſt diſpoſed youth may, in an unguarded moment, when fluſhed with liquor, or heated by converſation

or intemperance, be induced to ſacrifice his *innocence*, *health*, and *peace of mind*, to the gratification of appetite where his bluſhes are ſpared, and he thinks himſelf unſeen and ſecure from detection."

Which ever way we turn, we are ſurrounded with *difficulties*: and what ſhall we ſay, *my Lord*, to the conduct of our *magiſtrates*, or the efficacy of our *laws* to accompliſh a reformation? it is but too obvious from experience, that all nations want *ſkill* to make, or *virtue* to execute any law, to anſwer the purpoſe effectually: and it is much eaſier to *talk* of ſuch laws than to *frame* and *adapt* them to our *religion* and *conſtitution*. To remove the evil depends on *individuals*; and *true religion*, and *true politics* will ever be in a *tottering* condition, unleſs the *virtue of private perſons* comes in aid of their ſupport. *That virtue*, ſo far as its influence extends, is demonſtrated in the *preſent deſign* of the *Magdalane Charity*; and, I hope, *divine Providence* will befriend it. The plan is ſo agreeable to the *humanity* of this nation in general, and the execution is attended with with ſo many *intereſting events*, it muſt ſtrike the hearts of all kinds of people. I can aſſure your *Lordſhip*, that there is the ſtrongeſt marks of *real contrition* in many of theſe women; and as high proofs of *unfeigned joy*, on the part of their parents and friends, upon their being reſtored to them, as *new* creatures; not by any wonder-working power, but as a moral effect, ariſing from a habit of induſtry. Many are alſo placed out into *good*

ſervices,

ſervices, and in the faireſt way of being ſaved from perdition. In due time *your Lordſhip* ſhall know further how this charity operates: in the mean while be aſſured of my zeal, and of that of my *collegues*, and I truſt that Providence will beſriend us.

I am, with great reſpect, &c.

Prin-

Principles on which the Magdalane Charity is founded.



LETTER IV.

To W—— O—— *Esq;*

AS it is one essential part of *wisdom* to bear with *folly*, so it is a duty to accomodate ourselves to the prepossessions of mankind, till we can lead them gently into the paths of *truth:* nor should we be at all surprized that a design of this nature has been so many years in agitation. Considering the perverseness of the women, who generally take up the infamous *trade of a harlot*, and make *choice* of this dreadful occupation, we must not wonder at the opinion which often prevails, with regard to their *impenitence*. But the truth is, these women differ from each other in temper and disposition, as much as any rank of mankind can do: and it is well known that all of the *same trade* are seldom of the *same mind*. The proposal to establish a house for *penitents* is very simple; the *execution* depends on the *piety*, and *good sense* of those who *contribute* to it, and still more of those who *conduct* it. I am persuaded your humanity will plead for it, upon these *conditions*.

1. To induce women who have lived as *prostitutes* to forsake their evil course of life.

2.

* The reason of this page 282 is, that the *two volumes* were printed so far with design to be in *one*, but many LETTERS, *&c.* being added to the first design, the work was made into *two* volumes.

2. To open a retreat for them where they may paſs their time in *comfort* and *ſafety*, under no other confinement than ſuch as ſhall be neceſſary for their own preſervation, and what *themſelves* ſhall have *voluntarily* conſented to, without any ſuch *legal* power, as experience has taught to be no ways adequate to the evil.

3. To *employ* them in the moſt uſeful manner, both for *themſelves* and the *community*.

4. To eſtabliſh ſuch *regulations* and œconomy as ſhall at once ſeclude them for any evil communication, and give them ſuch habits as may recommend them to the *ſober* part of mankind.

5. To treat them with ſuch regard as ſhall convince them that nothing more is meant than their *own happineſs*, and yet avoid ſhowing any ſuch *indulgence* as ſhall either tempt the evil-minded to *abuſe* the charity, or diſqualify any who are really penitent from procuring a maintenance by *virtuous induſtry*.

6. To diſmiſs them whenever it ſhall appear for their ſervice, but to recommend to them to ſtay till they have acquired ſuch habits as promiſe fair to ſecure them from the bad effects of *idleneſs*, and till they are qualified to get their bread *in the fear of God*.

7. To give them ſuch a ſhare of the produce of their induſtry, as may give them an entrance into the world with *decency* and *reputation*.

8. To conduct this charity in ſuch a manner, that it ſhall be conſidered as a favor to be accepted: and conſequently inconſiſtent with the notion of impriſonment,

and

and yet *deſireable* only by the moſt *wretched* of mankind.

Experience teaches us that all this is practicable, and ſurely no charity can have more piety, or more dignity. I dare hope it will be well looked after. "And "if the price of a *good woman* is beyond gold:" if the ſincereſt joys of life flow from the conduct of *virtuous women*; and the acuteſt miſeries from the *vicious* part of the ſex, were it poſſible to drop the conſideration of a future ſtate, the converting *bad* women into *good* ones would be a work worthy the higheſt applauſe of *men*, as the converſion of ſinners is a ſubject of joy to *angels*. Even the conſciouſneſs of ſuch a *good intention* will aſſuredly advance their happineſs who attempt it. This is a ſhort detail of what is meant, and what no man who has a heart like yours can object to. I am *Yours*, &c.

Dec. 1758.

The

The general ſtate of human life a motive to befriend the Magdalane Charity.

LETTER V.

To the ſame.

I Have always found it dangerous to *refine*: we muſt ſeek for *motives* in every man's heart, which *he* only can fathom who made it: but in theſe caſes there are many reaſons which lie level to common obſervation; and though we may ſuppoſe that many are warmed with zeal and piety, I ſee nothing in it but what *ſober ſenſe* and *humanity* abſolutely demand of us.

It is confeſſed that *hope* and *fear* are the great incentives to all human actions: and ſuch as reſpect the hope of *heaven* and the fear of *hell* ought in all reaſon to be, not only the moſt free of all *worldly vanity*, but alſo to have the ſtrongeſt influence, whenever any great occaſion offers of doing a moſt eſſential good to mankind. What ſhall I do to be ſaved? — How ſhall I moſt effectually ſerve *my God*, *my country*, *and mankind?* This was not the queſtion of a *hermit*, contented to be *paſſively* virtuous, but of one whoſe ſpirit engaged him in the active ſcenes of life: of one who had the happineſs to behold the *Meſſiah* with his own eyes, and was anxious to give the higheſt proof of the moſt *ſincere* obedience to him

as his *Sovereign*, his *Lawgiver*, and his *Saviour*. The queſtion points out the true diſtinction between the *buſy wiſe man*, and the *buſy fool*; between him who *employs* the talents GOD has intruſted him with, and him who *ſquanders* them away on *trifles*.

We know well that riches and honors are not always found in the paths of the *virtuous*, nor yet in thoſe of the moſt underſtanding part of mankind, but he who is *rich in good works*, and full of the *hope of immortality*, ought to eſteem himſelf *happy*: and whilſt we make a *true eſtimate of life*, we ſhall clearly diſcover, that *virtue* and *underſtanding*, which in a religious ſenſe mean the ſame thing, are ſo eſſential to us, that without them all other things are *really vain*.

Alas, my friend, how unwilling are we to learn even from our own obſervation! but we ſee in the perſons of others, that our days are but "*as ſhadows that depart*, "*or as a dream when one awaketh*:" We *believe* that the *ſoul is immortal*, yet we *doat* on this world as if there was *no other*: we are *convinced* that there is a ſtate of *happineſs*, *and of miſery* after death; but how ſeldom do we *act* up to the *power* of ſuch belief? This would be the greateſt of all *wonders*, if we were not equally ſenſible of the *frailties* of human nature, and the *deluſions* men often fall into. *Reaſon* and the laws of our own minds, as well as *faith* in the attributes of the inviſible God, compel us to acquit him with regard to the *duties* he requires of us: and *weak* and *indigent* as we are, when we contemplate the wonderful frame of our *bodies*, and the more

amazing

amazing properties of the *ſoul*, we cannot avoid entertaining a *reverence for ourſelves*, eſpecially when we find that from our *weakneſs* ariſes our *ſtrength*; that our very ſenſibility of infirmities puts us on our guard: abſorbs the *pride* to which our depravity ſo much inclines us, and *humbles the ſoul:* from hence it is that we confeſs our *dependance*, and in the *deepeſt humiliation* proſtrate ourſelves, and *adore* the hand that made us!

Thus in ſpite of our *imperfections*, or the *conſciouſneſs* of our infirmities, we *march on*, and aſpire at a much higher glory than *earthly* ſplendor, or the *applauſe of men.* Though ſo many of us *ſweat* under a load of evils, yet we are ſtill ſupported: a rational confidence in a *future ſtate of happineſs*, makes us truly *maſters of the world.* And though reaſon and ſenſe teach us to *value life*, wiſdom inſtructs us to *conſent to die*; and to a mind thus fortified, a *repugnance* to the will of heaven is worſe than *death.*

The *true philoſopher*, as well as the *true ſoldier*, will ever ſubmit to *diſcipline* and follow his *leader.* He knows it to be at once his DUTY and his HONOR *to obey.* He feels the force of *truth:* he exults in the reflection that he is *acting right*; and whether he *triumphs* or is *led in chains*, he looks forward to the world unknown, ſtill perſuaded, that he ſhall *one day be happy.*

Such are the heights to which the *native greatneſs* of the ſoul conducts us. But, *alas*, *my friend*, we ought to conſider that he who has been moſt expoſed to danger, ſhould moſt rejoice when the campaign of life is ended:

ended: and when nothing more remains than to look up to heaven *for mercy*, the reflection on having *fought* for others, and *ſought* the means of their *happineſs*, will give him the beſt aſſurance of *his own*, in thoſe regions, *at the verge of which he ſtands!*

With reſpect to the wretched objects in queſtion; conſider how eaſily men give way to the ſolicitations of their ſenſes: pleaſure with *deluſive ſmiles* tempts us to deſert our poſt. *Paſſion* or *appetite*, *fancy* or *opinion*, miſrepreſent things to us, and either flatter us into a belief of that which has no exiſtence, or entice us to purſue thoſe *fleeting joys* which lead to *pain* and *ſorrow*. Is it any wonder then that many *overlook*, and many *deſpiſe* the law of life, and graſp at the *tranſient moment*, at the hazard of *eternity!*

If *life* is thus pregnant with evils, and if this is the general ſtate of it, motives to *beneficence* draw with irreſiſtible force, whenever there is ſuch an occaſion to exert them. You who underſtand human nature will moſt readily compaſſionate thoſe who from their ſituation were *early expoſed*, and themſelves being *very weak*, or the temptation *very ſtrong*, are now groaning in the miſerable *bonds of vice*; tormented with *anxious forebodings*, or ſleeping with a falſe *ſecurity* on the very *verge of perdition!* We know that offences muſt come; and we alſo know that woe is denounced againſt him by whom they come: but ſhall we not uſe the means which the mercies of heaven have put into our hands, to prevent the fatal conſequences as much as poſſible?

To be perſuaded that there *is hardly any evil without its remedy*, is the firſt ſtep towards finding it; and ſo far as we can ſuppoſe an effort of this kind can be carried, I make no doubt but that we ſhall *ſucceed*. Yet this is not all:—as creatures of one common nature *we are bound* to take care of each other: and in what elſe does the *eſſence* of religion conſiſt? It was for this end we were ſent into the world: *Juſtice* and *mercy* in their full diſplay, reſpecting men, are included in ſuch charities. The SON OF GOD himſelf appeared on earth charged with a commiſſion to ſave mankind, *upon condition of their repentance*; and there ſeems to be a *peculiar analogy* between the *duty* in general, and *this charity* in particular. It is beyond all diſpute that we are not to confine our regards to the body, as the generality of charities do: we are intereſted in extending them to another being; and if the higheſt promiſes are made to him that is inſtrumental to the ſalvation of others, can any man be ambitious of ſuccouring the *ſick* or *maimed*, the *naked* or the *hungry*, and not graſp at the means of *ſaving a ſoul from perdition*?

This is the ſimple ſtate of the queſtion before us; and though the means of ſaving ſouls are very numerous, in common life, where there is no charitable inſtitution in the caſe, yet in this *particular*, the ordinary methods do not ſeem adequate to the evil. Mankind are afraid of the *infection*, and require the *patient* to paſs through ſome kind of *purgation* before ſhe is admitted within their walls.—Think ſeriouſly of theſe things: give us your aſſiſtance, and be aſſured that I am, *Yours*, &c.

The abſurd reaſoning advanced by one part of mankind in favor of fornication.

LETTER VI.

To the ſame.

THE conſideration of the *Magdalane* Charity hath led me into a thouſand *ſerious thoughts* which might not otherwiſe have occured to my mind, and, I hope, I ſhall be the *better* for them. If I am *wrong* correct me; if *right*, be you alſo as much the better for them as you can.

There ſeems to have been a complaint exiſting between the ſexes, with regard to the treatment of each other, ever ſince our great anceſtor was *tempted* by his *wife* to tranſgreſs the commands of God. But our ſubject at preſent relates to the temptations of *concubinage*, and *promiſcuous commerce*, and the calamities which ariſe from the *neglect of marriage*.

Leſs deplorable were the evil, if the *female* only were in fault; but we ſee her often tempted by arguments, which experience of the miſerable conſequences do not countervail. Among other abſurdities, how often have I heard the common cant of libertines of both ſexes, "*that God never made man to be damned.*" If they know their own meaning, it muſt be this, "*that man is* MADE; "*and his maker certainly intended his happineſs, therefore* "*he muſt be happy; and tho' the ſame God that made him, has* "*declared the conditions on which that happineſs is to be ac-*

"*quired,*

"*quired, yet man may venture to paſs them over, as if* "*there were no conditions at all.*" Shall we call this an *opinion?* It is an *abſurdity* as great as was ever entertained by the pagan world. It tacitly implies a *conſcious guilt*, and puts all vices on the ſame level, which is more than they mean to ſay, and therefore renders the *abſurdity* the more *glaring*.

The *learned* and the *illiterate* may equally *bewilder* themſelves in their enquiries, but ſtill they muſt recur to this *concluſion*, that we were *made free*, and are *rational* agents; that we *are free*, and as ſuch, a *free* and *rational* obedience muſt, from the very nature of things, be expected from us. Could God be the judge of mankind if there was *nothing to be judged of?* — And what *ſentence* could he paſs, were there no *puniſhment* for *offenders?* — And *what* can men be *puniſhed* for, after death, but their *diſobedience* to the divine command? —Wretched mortals, thus to endevor to put out the eyes of their own underſtanding, that under the ſhelter of darkneſs they may gratify the animal part of their compoſition, or pleaſe ſome favorite paſſion, for a *moment*, at the riſk of everlaſting puniſhment.

Thus the *weak*, and the *wicked* part of mankind, generally incline to adapt their *notions* to their *practice*; and talk of the infinite *mercies* of God, as if they meant only to *flatter* him out of his *juſtice*. As it is *blaſphemy* to *challenge* our Maker for creating us what *we are*, or for not making the *conditions* of our happineſs *different from what they are*; it muſt be the groſſeſt *folly* to imagine he will reverſe his

doctrees. If we really *believe* in him; if we have any pretence to the *privileges of reaſon*, we ſhall find the higheſt *conſolation* in the contemplation of his *mercy*, whilſt the terror of his *juſtice* will keep us in awe: we ſhall do honor to the *power* he has entruſted us with, and receive with joy the *aſſiſtances* he has promiſed: and thus, inſtead of *rebelling* againſt his *authority*, we ſhall find infinite reaſon to pay divine honors to his *clemency*, as the ſupreme lawgiver; and to *adore* his *goodneſs*, as the *tender parent* of mankind.

Would to God theſe no-reaſoners would remember that we are apt to form our belief, by our *practice*. Every one may *ſee*, if they chuſe to look, what God has been pleaſed to reveal of himſelf; and what his *will* is towards mankind. Thoſe who fondly imagine that he *means* the contrary of what he *ſays*; or that our revelation is *fabulous*, may as well diſcard *chriſtianity* at once. They muſt either give up the *bible* and *teſtament*, or *renounce* their *reaſon*, or *acknowledge* their *ſins*. Thought may be in ſome degree *baniſhed*, and the mind become *inſenſible* of *fear*, or *ſorrow*; but will the *ſoul* therefore ceaſe to be immortal? — Or will a God of *infinite juſtice* not puniſh for offences, the *habitual exerciſe* of which, occaſions this very *inſenſibility*?

Neither *divines* nor *philoſophers* are agreed, how far virtue is *natural* to the ſoul of man: This is a ſpeculative enquiry, but it is *univerſally* confeſſed that man is by nature a *reaſonable Being*, and that *reaſon* declares againſt every thing we believe to be *vicious*. Whatever name we

give

give to the *propenſity* in queſtion, we know that it *unhinges* the whole frame, and generally diſtempers the *ſoul*, as well as the *body*. It is amazing what *havoc* it makes with the minds of ſome females: they ſeem to acquire with it every vice upon earth. Dropping this dreadful conſideration, for the preſent, we may eaſily diſcover that the expreſs command of God, as handed down by his once choſen people, as well as the *ſpirit*, and whole context of the *chriſtian law*, fixes the conditions of this gratification: and thoſe who have kept alive any ſparks of their *native modeſty*, and are not given up to what the royal prophet calls an *impudent mind*, will ever *lament* the evil, if they cannot *cure* it: in the mean while they ſtand obliged to carry on the warfare of life, leſt the world ſhould be involved in anarchy and confuſion, and over-run by this vice. And as it is the *duty* of ſuch perſons, ſo it ever will be their *honor*, to *endevor* to reſtore things to that order which the great author of nature intended they ſhould be in, namely, that *reaſon* ſhould give laws to *paſſion* and *appetite*, and not be rendered ſubſervient to them.

Life is called a warfare: it is particularly ſo to a *chriſtian*; and were you to live in the world as much as I do, and converſe with all kinds of people, you would think yourſelf a *ſoldier* in good earneſt. Let us ſtrive to render our *victories*, if we obtain any, ſubſervient to the happineſs of others, ſtill keeping in view the *great end* for which we *contend*. Heaven grant you *life* and *health*, I am perſuaded you will employ them to the honor of your Maker. Farewell. *Yours*, &c.

Falſe reaſonings upon incontinency. The benefit of the Magdalane Houſe, with reſpect to the impreſſions it may make on young minds.

LETTER VII.

To the ſame.

YOU who have been bred up from your youth, *in the fear of God*, may be ſurprized to hear people *profeſſing chriſtianity*, conjure up difficulties, and amuſe themſelves with *fine ſpun arguments* on the ſubject of *fornication*: but how clear ſoever the *precept* is from the words of our *Saviour*, as well as his *Apoſtles*, I am ſorry to tell you there are many, of *different ranks*, who exert their *ingenuity* to find reaſons to ſhake it off, and *make a religion* adapted to their inclinations: at the ſame time it is about *a million* to one but that he who argues thus, practiſes the vice *firſt*, and finds reaſons for it *afterwards*: or makes a ſyſtem of his own, *in order* to reconcile his mind to the practice of it.

There is an evident *inconſiſtency* in the character of this nation. Every one thinks for *himſelf*, which is the natural effect of the great *freedom* we enjoy: and yet almoſt every one is a dupe to *faſhion*, not only in the *cut of his coat*, but alſo in the model of his *opinion* and *moral practice*, according to the *ſtation of life* in which he is placed, and the *company* he converſes with. When this prevails

in

In following *good*, it is ſometimes aſcribed to our *imitative* faculties; when *bad*, to *corruption* of heart. A fondneſs for *novelty*, I believe predominates in both caſes; but our *good ſenſe* has ſeldom any great ſhare in either.

The *plea* of *antiquity* cannot vindicate *error*; but one would naturally conclude that the opinions which the *wiſeſt* and *beſt of men* have adopted, through a long ſucceſſion of ages, upon no leſs a ſubject than *everlaſting bliſs or miſery*, ſuch opinions having all the marks of integrity and purity of mind on their ſide, ſhould be preferred to *notions* and *conceits* which ſtand on no better foundation than the *practice* of thoſe who give a looſe to their appetites. Yet this is *the error* that prevails among a certain claſs of men with regard to the criminal gratification in queſtion, with reſpect to the *falſe reaſonings* they maintain concerning it.

And what are the *conſequences* of ſuch *abſurd notions*? The more ſober part of mankind of the *middle* ſtations in life go on in a certain equal pace, but many of the *higher* claſſes, from *falſe* reaſoning, and many of the *lower* from *no reaſoning* at all, are apt to go into *ſtrange exceſſes*. The common people copy after the *ſuperior orders*, but not having the ſame motives to *external decency*, give themſelves up to their *appetites*, and too many of them become totally depraved in their manners.

It might be happy if the clergy were to make more frequent appeals to the *hearts of their audience*, from daily experience of the ſad effects of this vice. The *hopes of heaven*, and the *fears of hell*, might then influence the lives of

ſome, more than they do at preſent. And if when this *illegal* commerce happens to diſturb the repoſe of *families*, more were put to the iſſue of *religion*, and leſs to *temporal puniſhment*, we ſhould ſee the parent leſs *indulgent* to the *ſon*, and in many caſes leſs ſevere to the *daughter*: fewer *young men* would go aſtray, and conſequently fewer *young women* be debauched: the puniſhment would be more equal; the *man* would be more *reproached*, and the *woman* not ſo often plunged into ſuch *miſery*, as to be excluded even from the *hopes* of a recovery.

Upon the great principle of *mercy* and *commiſeration* is the *Magdalane Charity* founded; and I apprehend it will *in ſome degree* correct the abuſe I have juſt mentioned: For as it would be abſurd to ſuppoſe it of much uſe, unleſs the parties offending have ſuch *a ſenſe of their conduct, as inclines them moſt heartily to make their peace with heaven*; when they are *ſo inclined*, it ſupplies the means of doing it, which could not be found, by many *poor wretches*, before the eſtabliſhment of this inſtitution. This being done, every thing that is intereſting to the *virtuous* part of mankind will follow of courſe; ſo that it is hardly in the nature of things, but that with *proper care*, this charity muſt prove a remedy for many calamities *paſt*, and many which are *to come*; whilſt it influences, in a *gentle*, and almoſt imperceptible manner, the conduct even of thoſe who, at firſt view, may be either tempted to *ridicule* it, or think it *a viſionary project*.

As a diſcourſe *on death* is apt to make the deeper impreſſion on the mind, upon occaſion of a *funeral*, ſo will the conſideration of the breach of the chriſtian law, with reſpect to the vice in queſtion, in a *place*, where a number of wretches appear at once, as ſo many monuments of the *divine vengeance*, demonſtrated by the miſery which induced them to ſeek for ſhelter there; and of the *divine mercy* in the protection afforded them. The boldeſt violator of the *chriſtian law* is apt to feel himſelf *diſmayed* upon ſuch occaſions; and his recourſe to ſuch arguments as I have mentioned, appear ſo much the more as *arrant trifling with his ſoul!*

If you bring your ſon *to town* to ſhow him this great ſcene of every thing that is *good*, and every thing that is *bad*, rather carry him to ſee the *repentance* than the *crime*. The man who conducted his ſon to a *brothel* to ſhow him *obſcenity* in all its *horrid* forms, did not conſider that the gratification might be obtained with *elegancy*, and that the nearer the *temptation*, the farther diſtant the *motive* to reſiſt it: but that muſt needs appear in its true light as a *crime*, which ſo many ſincerely *repent* of. I queſtion if there can be any *ſafety* to a young man, in *this town*, but from one of theſe cauſes; a competent degree of *native modeſty*, or a mind well fortified with *religion*; and perhaps it is owing to the united force of both that the happier part of mankind *eſcape the ſnare*. *Prudence* and *fear* may do ſomething to avoid *diſcredit* or *diſeaſe*, but where a young man has money, his prudence, if not aſſiſted by religion, will be chiefly exerciſed in *concealing* his amours.

It is an admirable *picture* which we find in a *modern dreſs*, in the wiſe man's deſcription of a harlot *, the faſhion of *times* not having altered, in this particular, in any age or country; though I believe there neither are, nor ever were, any harlots ſo little obſervant of *external decency* as thoſe in the ſtreets of *London*. You know the poet to whom we are obliged, for the following verſes.

My son, *th' inſtruction that my words impart,*
Grave on the living tablet *of thy heart,*
And all the wholeſome precepts *that I give,*
Obſerve with ſtricteſt reverence, *and live.*
Let all thy homage be to wiſdom *paid,*
Seek her protection, *and implore her* aid:
That ſhe may keep thy ſoul from harm *ſecure,*
And turn thy footſteps from the HARLOT'*s door,*
Who with curs'd *charms lures th' unweary in,*
And ſooths *with flattery their* ſouls to ſin.
Once *from my window,* as I caſt my eye
On thoſe that paſs'd, in giddy numbers *by,*
A youth, among the fooliſh youths *I ſpy'd,*
Who took not ſacred wiſdom *for his* guide.
Just *as the ſun withdrew his* cooler light,
And evening ſoft led on the ſhades of night,
He ſtole, *in covert twilight, to his* fate,
And paſs'd the corner near the HARLOT'*s gate;*
When, lo, a WOMAN *comes!* ———

Looſe

* Vid. Pag. 189.

Looſe her attire, and ſuch her glaring dreſs,
As aptly did the harlot's mind expreſs;
Subtle ſhe is, and practis'd in the arts,
By which the wanton conquer heedleſs arts:
Stubborn and loud ſhe is: ſhe hates her home,
Varying her place and form, ſhe loves to roam:
Now ſhe's within, now in the ſtreets do's ſtray,
Now at each corner ſtands, and waits her prey.
The youth ſhe ſeiz'd; and laying now aſide
All modeſty, the female's juſteſt pride,
She ſaid with an embrace, here at my houſe
Peace-offerings are, this day I paid my vows.
I therefore came abroad to meet my dear
And, lo, in happy hour, I find thee here.
Upon her tongue did ſuch ſmooth miſchief dwell,
And from her lips ſuch welcome flatt'ry fell,
Th' unguarded youth, in ſilken fetters ty'd,
Reſign'd his reaſon, and with eaſe comply'd.
Thus does the ox to his own ſlaughter go,
And thus is ſenſeleſs of th' impending blow.
Thus flies the ſimple bird into the ſnare,
That ſkilful fowlers for his life prepare.
But let my sons attend, attend may they
Whom youthful vigour may to ſin betray;
Let them falſe charmers fly, and guard their hearts
Againſt the wily wanton's pleaſing arts.
With care direct their ſteps, nor turn aſtray
To tread the paths of her deceitful way;
Leſt they too late of her fell power complain,
And fall, where many mightier have been ſlain.

If

If a *young man* has a competent ſhare of underſtanding, and compares this *deſcription* with what he ſees with his *own eyes*, and hears with his *own ears*, every *night* and almoſt *every day* he walks the ſtreets in this town, may we not conclude that it will put him on his *guard?* And whatever his companions ſhould ſuggeſt to him, on the article of *fornication*, if under the *Moſaical* diſpenſation it was conſidered as *criminal* in the ſight of God; and promiſcuous commerce was productive of many *temporal evils*, though he ſhould never have read his *New Teſtament*, he will hardly think this vice *conſiſtent* with *chriſtianity*, or agreeable to the laws of his country. I am, &c.

Reaſons againſt libertiniſm from conſiderations of humanity and the analogy of things.

LETTER VIII.

To the ſame.

THERE are many ſecret ſprings which feed our depravity; and men eaſily convert bleſſings into curſes. Our fondneſs for amuſement, and the expenſive pleaſures which *riches* have introduced, make us greater *triflers in religion* than if we were poorer, and *obliged* to live more *collectedly*. The *infidel* refinements which ſome men of education have rendered *faſhionable*, may alſo ariſe from the ſame ſource. In the mean while I apprehend that

that no women upon earth, of the higher ranks, have nobler ſentiments of *honor* than ours; and the reaſon is plain: for *triſling* as their education may be, in ſeveral inſtances, yet upon the whole they are better taught than the *women* of moſt other countries. But they are at leaſt as great dupes to *faſhion* as men; and ſome of their *amuſements* carry them farther than is conſiſtent with that *native modeſty*, that *genuine ſimplicity* which characteriſe an amiable woman; and which *Milton* calls

"*Woman's domeſtic honor and chief praiſe.*"

Even our *theatres*, which might be rendered the *nobleſt ſcenes of the moſt rational and inſtructive entertainment*, in their preſent mode of exhibition, rather corrupt the heart than purify it. What the poets ſay is indubitably true, and particularly as addreſſed to the female world.

No pardon, vile obſcenity *ſhould find*,
Tho' wit *and* art *conſpire to move your mind*.
A nation's taſte *depends on* you.
——— *Perhaps a nation's* virtue *too*.
O think, *how* glorious *'twere to raiſe*
A theatre *to virtue's praiſe*.
Where no indignant bluſh *might riſe*,
No wit *be taught to plead for* vice;
But every young attentive *ear*
Inhibe the precepts living there.

And

And every unexperienced *breaſt*
There feel its own rude hints *expreſs'd,*
And, 'waken'd by the glowing ſcene,
Unfold the worth that lurks within.

We have not, even the *ambition* of making our amuſements tend to the greateſt ends of life, which they might do, and not be the leſs *amuſements:* inſtead of their being *as they are*, they might be ſchools of virtue. Though ſome of our *modern paſtimes* may *promote* matrimony, they are often a means of *preventing* it, and ſtill oftener of rendering it *uneaſy*, if not *unhappy*, when it is made. The reaſon is plain: ſuch a habit of *diſſipation* turns the *current* of the affections in both ſexes creates an appetite to *variety*, and is the cauſe that many, naturally *well inclined*, not only live as it were on the *verge of ruin* with reſpect to *chaſtity*, but alſo in point of *prudence*, with regard to the honeſt means of their ſupport. *Sober domeſtic pleaſures*, and the *joys* of religion, move on too *gently*; theſe do not agitate their paſſions, and therefore they ſeek for others, *at all events.*

The *common people* following the example, without the *advantages of education*, the conſequences are often ſeen in ſuch *promiſcuous commerce*, as *can by no means* be reconciled on the *chriſtian* plan. Thus a neglect of the *divine prohibition* predominates amongſt great numbers of people ſo far, that the *word of God*, though very *explicit* and free from *ambiguity*, *ſeems to be of no effect:* forgetting that if we reject the authority of the New Teſtament in

one

one caſe, we may reject it in all caſes, and make an end of the *chriſtian religion*. It may be obſerved that moſt other breaches of the divine law are either *unpremeditated*, or committed under a *conſciouſneſs* of the *guilt*; but this is done, not only *premeditately*, but ſeemingly *without any ſuch conſciouſneſs*; clearly demonſtrating that the *ſpirit of modeſty* is at as low an *ebb*, as the *ignorance* and *inattention* of the vulgar *flow high*; and that both together *overwhelm* their ſenſe of their religion. What numerous miſchiefs this may create, even in a *political* view, is hard to determine, but in a *religious* light it is *terrible*.

This is not diſtinguiſhed as the *age of libertiniſm* with reſpect to *intrigues*; yet with people of *education* the evil lies deep. They acknowledge that the duties which *chriſtianity* requires are *noble*, *exalted*, *delightful*: but they are extremely reluctant to entertain the *practical belief* that the *religion of Chriſt* is, at the ſame time, a *religion of ſelf-denial*. Though it ſo clearly oppoſes the propenſity to the ſin in queſtion, yet from the opportunities I have, of hearing the *ſentiments* of *the gay world*, and being informed of their *practices*, I know they endevor to *puzzle*, and render the precept *ambiguous*, as if what is generally denominated the *lawleſs commerce of the ſexes*, were not *lawleſs*.

As to the religious *anxiety* of fathers, upon the ſubject of their ſons falling from their *innocence* with reſpect to women, I am afraid it is not much in *faſhion*, in *London*, whatever it may be with you in the *country*; and yet the *wiſe man*'s recommendation is juſt as *true* now, as it was

ſo

ſo many hundred years ago; and ſurely as much in the *Chriſtian æra* as it was under the reign of *Solomon*.

Do you now hear of many who conſider the ſtory of *Joſeph* as a conqueſt over himſelf, that glitters more than *renown in arms?* Or does the *continence of Scipio* fire their breaſt with a higher ſenſe of glory, than the moſt ſucceſsful *vicious amour?* You remember he is introduced ſpeaking thus to *Indibilis*. "It is not the manner of the *Romans* to uſe all the power they *juſtly* may: we fight not to *ravage* countries, or break through the *ties of humanity:* I am acquainted with your worth, and *your intereſt in this lady:* fortune has made me *your maſter*, but I deſire to be *your friend*. This is *your wife*, take her; and may the gods bleſs you with her. Far be it from *Scipio* to purchaſe a looſe and *momentary pleaſure* at the rate of making *an honeſt man unhappy.*"

The hiſtorian continues "*Indibilis*'s heart was too full to make him any anſwer, but he threw himſelf at the feet of the general, and wept aloud. The *captive lady* fell into the ſame poſture, and they both remained ſo, till the father burſt into the following words: "*Oh divine Scipio! The gods have given you more than human virtue! Oh glorious leader! Oh wondrous youth! Does not that obliged virgin give you, while ſhe prays to the gods for your proſperity, and thinks you ſent down from them, raptures above all the tranſports which you could have reaped from the poſſeſſion of her injured perſon?*" The *temperate Scipio* anſwered him without much emotion, and ſaying, "*Father be a friend to Rome,*" retired.

This

This was very pompous flattery, for *Scipio* muſt have acted like a villain if he had done otherwiſe. But when *we conſider the principles* on which the *chriſtian* acts, the *rewards* which are promiſed him, and the *puniſhments* with which he is *threatened*; to *fall* with any *temptation*, is enough to create *bluſhes* in any man's cheeks who talks of it. But if we ſpeak of a *chriſtian hero*, as we do now of a *Roman captain*, there can be no doubt of his acting *like himſelf*; the great complaint is that *chriſtian heroiſm* is not in faſhion: and that thoſe who pretend to thirſt moſt after *glory*, ſeem to think leaſt about it; whilſt the bulk of our fellow-creatures follow the dictates of their *animal* part, troubling themſelves too little with arguments drawn from the *purity* required of the *followers of Chriſt*, or the *nature of the offence* with regard to civil ſociety. Thus it happens that *prudence* or *ſhame*, with reſpect to *high life*, and the *rod of the magiſtrate* with regard to the *vulgar*, ſeem to have a greater influence on their conduct, than the motives derived from the *fear of God*, expreſſed in the *hope* of *eternal bliſs*, or the *fear of everlaſting puniſhments*.

I do not mean that this nation is more wicked than the reſt of mankind: I believe that we are as rational in *faith*, and as ſincere in *practice*, as any other: but it is not a compariſon with *other nations* that will avail us; nor is our *national character* ſo much in queſtion; it is the *lives of individuals*, compared with the *written laws of God*. But becauſe in general we have more liberty, think more *freely*, and have clearer notions of *religion*, than perhaps

any other people on the face of the whole earth, it is therefore the more *melancholy* to reflect, how it comes to operate ſo little in the *moſt momentous concern of life.*

The leaſt conſideration muſt lead the *candid* and *ingenuous* part of mankind into the firmeſt belief, that this commerce is forbidden, were it only from obſervation of the *pernicious tendency* of it to every branch of *moral rectitude:* for though all who treſpaſs do not paſs from one crime to another, yet the greater portion of the women who give themſelves up to this practice, become *ſo depraved*, that many doubt to this day if the *Magdalane Charity* can recal *any* of them to a ſenſe of duty.

If we alſo obſerve the *happineſs* which attends the ſtrict obſervance of the *nuptial bonds*, and the *miſery* which uſually waits on the breach of them, there can be no doubt of the *malignity* of this vice. The cuſtoms of the world cannot alter the *divine order* and conſtitution of things, or abrogate the *divine law:* and whatever the wiſdom of providence might permit, at ſome periods of time, and under ſome circumſtances, as to a *plurality* of wives, ſtill they were *wives:* but *chriſtianity* allows but of *one*; and it is evident, that this ſcheme tends to the higheſt perfection human nature is capable of. *Women* are undeniably made as *free* as *men*, though *ſubordination* is eſſential to the well-being of life. If *inclination* were the rule of conduct, the *one* might as well plead for *variety* as the *other:* and if notwithſtanding all the injunctions of *divine* and *human laws*, ſuch *infinite calamities* are introduced into the world by *promiſcuous* com-

merce, and the *invaſion of property*, what could be expected, were it guarded by *no law*, but a total *ſubverſion of all government?* We muſt ſuppoſe the whole conſtitution of things to be changed to be able to *reaſon* upon it. The tortures of *jealouſy* muſt no longer have any place in the human ſoul; nor *ſlighted love* have any pangs. If we allow the *woman* to be as *free* as the *man*, we muſt adhere to the doctrine of *one* to *one*, or renounce our ſuperiority over *brutes* in the inſtance of the continuation of our ſpecies.

In countries where one man has many women, the women are not conſidered as entitled to the ſame *common freedom*, nor are they *chriſtians*; but ſtill they look on that *man* to be the moſt *virtuous* who is contented with *one* woman. Upon any other ſyſtem, there can be no *ſecurity* in that property, which had always a *peculiar ſanctity* in the moſt unenlightened ages of the world. In proportion as *men* have been *civilized*, the chief happineſs of *ſocial ties* has ariſen from the ſame cauſe. It is thus *reaſon* and *ſenſe*, *duty* and *appetite* become one object; the line is drawn between the *animal* and *intellectual* nature of the human ſpecies, and the *divine order* is obſerved. *Chriſtianity* has fixed the *union*, and made it *indiſſoluble*; and except for certain reaſons which *human legiſlators* have wiſely determined to adopt, of *two evils* to prefer that which *humanly ſpeaking* ſeems to be the *leaſt*, it is *never* diſſolved.

I am inſenſibly led by this thought to a beautiful paſſage in *Milton*, than whom no one ſeems to have been a greater maſter of the ſubject, and not the leſs for having

ing himſelf experienced the *ſorrows* as well as the *joys* of the nuptial ſtate. He writes like a *philoſopher* and a *chriſtian*, as well as a *ſtateſman* and a *ſubject*.

" *Hail wedded love! myſterious law! true ſource*
" *Of human offſpring! ſole propriety*
" *In paradiſe, of all things common elſe!*
" *By thee adult'rous luſt was driv'n from man*
" *Among the beſtial herds to range: by thee,*
" *Founded in reaſon, loyal, juſt, and pure,*
" *Relations dear, and all the charities*
" *Of father, ſon, and brother, firſt were known!*
" *Perpetual fountain of domeſtic ſweets!*
" *Here love his golden ſhafts employs; here lights*
" *His conſtant lamp, and waves his purple wings:*
" *Here reigns and revels; not in the bought ſmile*
" *Of harlots, loveleſs, joyleſs, unindear'd*
" *Caſual fruition; nor in court amours,*
" *Mix'd dance, or wanton maſk, or midnight ball,*
" *Or ſerenade, which the ſtarv'd lover ſings*
" *To his proud fair, beſt quitted with diſdain.*"

We may alſo obſerve, that as *conjugal* love is the beſt ſecurity of a *ſtate*; *fornication*, comparatively conſidered, tends to the *diſſolution* of it. What does it avail to ſhut up women like *animals*, not to be truſted with their own liberty, as practiſed in *Aſia*? Can they avoid the evils of *diſcord* among thoſe who have an *equal right* to thoſe affections, which it is impoſſible a man can *equally divide*?

divide? And is the increaſe of mankind promoted, whilſt they are robb'd of the *peace* and *harmony* of *ſociety?*

In the caſe where there is moſt *elegancy*, and where, if we drop the conſideration of *religion*, nothing ſeems to be wanting but the prieſt to perform the ceremonies appointed by *human laws*; what an *anxious* ſituation it is, thoſe who are called *kept miſtreſſes* are beſt able to ſay! If they *do not* love a man, they are but a ſmall remove from the *mercenary harlot*; and if they *do love him*, what dreadful moments they paſs in reflecting on the precarious nature of their *contract!* On the other hand, for a man to be bound to his *miſtreſs* whom he does *not love*, ſeems to be of all ſtates the moſt *irkſome*; and to be true and *conſtant* to her, whether he loves *her or not*, is being a *huſband*, not only without the honor due to the character, but ſuffering the diſgrace in his own perſon, in the perſon of the *woman*, and in their *common progeny*. Could we put religion out of the queſtion, there are but few inſtances in which this kind of compact is not full of *anguiſh* and *diſtreſs*. Of this, women muſt be allowed the *beſt judges:* they feel the *evil* moſt, and have moſt reaſon to complain of the violation of the *common rights of human nature*, with regard to the *equality* of the ſexes, *and their mutual obligations* to be *true* to each other, from the time they come together, let the circumſtances be what they may. If a man pleads that he found a woman polluted to his hands, he may as well urge that when a woman has once tranſgreſſed, no further ceremony need be uſed; her ſoul is of no va-

lue, and though an *accountable being*, ſhe is no more worth preſerving than a *dog* or a *cat*.

There ſeems to be a kind of *natural juſtice* due to thoſe who ſeek relief from *miſery*, occaſioned by their being *debauched* and *abandoned*. *Men* are confeſſedly the *guardians* of *women* in ſo many inſtances, that it is almoſt abſurd to doubt that Providence intended they ſhould be ſo; but it is no leſs evident that when they are not reſtrained by motives of obedience to the *divine* law, they do many acts of *injuſtice*, and violate the *ſtrongeſt obligations*, and yet keep out of the reach of *human laws*. There are ſome chriſtian countries * where it is ſaid marriage muſt ſucceed *cohabitation*; but I preſume the law is not obſerved, without many *exceptions*. Mankind are too depraved, for ſuch a law in its *utmoſt force*; as the lawmakers would find themſelves too cloſely bound.

The world has indeed introduced a motive of reſtraint which they call *honor*: this is ſometimes of great uſe to keep us in *awe*, as *guardians* of the ſex; but as every one puts what ſignification he pleaſes to the word, we muſt not be ſurprized that ſo few acknowledge they act *without honor* in this inſtance. If a man does a *premeditated act*, which from the nature of it may lay the foundation of another's miſery, if ſuch miſery does really follow, I do not comprehend how, in *honor*, he can leave the party without taking his ſhare in her ſufferings. Though the unguarded youth may ſometimes juſtly complain of the *ſnares laid for him*, great *cruelty* as well as *injuſtice* are often

* *Denmark.*

often practiſed by men, without any imputation of *diſhonor*, demonſtrating the abſurdity of adopting any rule of life, but ſuch as is founded in reaſon, and obedience to the *divine law*.

This conſideration is recommended in very *emphatical* terms by the ingenious Mr. *Dodd*, in the ſermon which I ſent you upon the ſubject of the *Magdalane Charity*: with a very little change of his words, he ſays,

" Motives of *honor* ſhould certainly influence many, and thoſe more eſpecially who have led women aſtray. If ſuch *reflect* at all, the upbraidings of conſcience will convince them that they cannot *exert* themſelves *too much* to *repair* the ruin they have occaſioned. In the *ſilent hour*, when PASSION *is huſhed*, and REASON *will be heard*, ſuppoſe the *wretched unfortunate girl*, (of whom we ſee ſo many introduced to *miſery*, *diſeaſe*, and *death*) now about to periſh in *extreme diſtreſs*; ſuppoſe her thus expoſtulating — ' See to what thy *unbridled* paſſion, and *ſeducing* luſt have brought me! Late *gay* in beauty, and *elegant* in charms, thy heart was captivated, *and every art* was uſed to *win* and to *deſtroy* me.—*Thou* didſt *prevail*, and *I* was *undone!* Unkind, and cruel, thou didſt *abandon* me! Thy paſſion *ſated*, thou left'ſt me to all the *extremity* of woe! Now ſee the ſad *end* of thy *triumph!* Oh *look upon me*, and ſee what cauſe thou haſt to *exult!* Behold theſe wretched *tatters* which ſcarely cover my *diſeaſed limbs*; where are the remains of their *former lovelineſs?* See my *tongue* cleaves to the roof of my mouth with *hunger*, and with *anguiſh*. But worſt of all my *ſoul!*—Here I am tormented

with *every kind of ſorrow:* dire conſciouſneſs of my *paſt miſdoings* torments and racks my heart. See my body conſigned in early youth to ſo *ſevere* an *end*; and my ſoul — mercy, mercy, O *gracious Father* — my ſoul in *horrible* danger of *eternal death!* O ſee me thus diſtreſſed, and *forſaken!* LOOK, *and* REPENT, *and* AMEND *thy ways!*"

Let any one contemplate *this picture*, and I defy him to *laugh*, though he ſhould have deluded a *hundred* girls: and let him who has deluded only *one*, conſider what he owes to *God* and his country, that he may do all that is in his power to prevent her becoming a *victim* to pollution. — The man who is only in the *company* of one who takes *a purſe*, the loſs of which may not create a *moment's pain* to him that loſes it, is by the *rigor* of the laws *condemned to die!* — Conſider the actions in *themſelves*, and conſider them in their *conſequences to ſociety*. Allow the *firſt* to be very *dangerous*, though the purſe were demanded by preſenting a *braſs ink-ſtand* inſtead of a *piſtol*; but the latter is *extremely pernicious* to the peace and happineſs of families; to the health of the thoughtleſs part of mankind, by communicating a diſeaſe; and at length by the party expoſing herſelf to a *promiſcuous commerce*, and in the iſſue involving her *body* and *ſoul* in deſtruction! Thoſe who attend the *Magdalane houſe*, and ſee the *objects* who are admitted there, have the moſt ſtriking ſenſe of the force of this argument. ADIEU.

Yours.

Errors

Errors in education. The deplorable ſtate of common proſtitutes, and the dangers of a miſguided ſeverity in ſome caſes.

LETTER IX.

To the ſame.

LITTLE *philoſophers* often complain as if it was in their power to rectify the evils they feel, by changing the nature of the thing complained of, whereas the remedy is in *changing their own minds.* *Women* will ever complain of the *tranſgreſſions of men*, as well as of their *own folly*, tho' it ſometimes happens that they *tempt* the *man*. In general it muſt be granted that *he* is the *aggreſſor*; it is *he* who contrives the means of gratifying himſelf *at their expence*, and he often paſſes with impunity, when the *woman* ſuffers: yet upon the whole it is very *happy* that the laws of honor, in regard to *chaſtity*, are ſo much more rigid towards women than men. If *men* were *puniſhed*, *women* would not be *leſs puniſhable*; and the moſt certain way of making *men virtuous*, is for *women* to be ſo; and would they be *more virtuous*, if the *laws of honor* were *leſs* ſtrict? Vice creates *great miſery* as the caſe now ſtands, would it create leſs if this circumſtance were changed? This ſtate of the argument does not render *cruelty* or *injuſtice* to women *leſs* criminal in the man; it is an aggravation of his conduct on the principle

ciple of *honor*. For if the *laws* of the land take no cognizance of his actions; according to the moſt refined notions of *honor*, there ariſes ſo much the ſtronger motive to the obſervance of juſtice and compaſſion.

If *virtue* is the ſupreme happineſs of accountable beings, that ſtate of life which renders virtue the moſt eaſy, muſt be the *beſt*. Therefore if *fear*, and a *ſenſe of ſhame*, operate as ſtrongly as any other paſſions, it muſt follow, that in proportion as *women* are more awed by *fear* and *ſhame* than *men* are, they are more *happy* than *men*. She who argues from the conduct of men, as if *example* could warrant *libertiniſm*, contradicts *reaſon* and *common ſenſe*, as well as *religion*. Therefore, however unequal the *judgment* of the world may *ſeem*, it would be dangerous to ſolicit for a *reverſe* of it, leſt the *remedy* ſhould be worſe than the *diſeaſe*: for whatever may be thought, by thoſe who are more inclined to *find motives for deviating from the paths of virtue*, than good reaſons to *walk ſteadily in them*, it is more eaſy to *imagine* than *expreſs*, the effects of a *change* of cuſtom and opinion, even ſuppoſing *that the crime in queſtion is, in the ſight of God, the ſame in both ſexes*.

Wherever the fault lies, this ſeems to be obvious, that were we to take *half* as much pains to impreſs the minds of the *female* world with *juſt notions of their condition*, and how to deport themſelves with *humility*, as we do to *feed their vanity*, we ſhould not ſee *ſo many victims* offered to incontinency. *Vanity*, and the *love of ſhow*, have hurried more women into perdition, than all the other

devices

devices of the *devil*, or *man*. *Adulation intoxicates* men: *admiration* is apt to *turn the brains* of women; whilſt fond notions of *dominion* have often perverted their hearts, till, like *tyrants*, they abuſed their *real power*, and fell a *ſacrifice* to thoſe whom they might have *governed*. For tho' with regard to the *ill uſe* of ſuch power, the poet juſtly obſerves of *men* that they are

" *Not deceived*
" *But fondly overcome by female charm.*"

the ſame power being employed for *good purpoſes*, would certainly produce *good*; and taking the ſex as we find it, women ſeem, from this very influence over mens minds, to have an equal ſhare in the *dominion* which heaven has given mankind over the world.

Beauty, if attended with *good ſenſe* and *modeſty*, bids fair for ſucceſs. The *Italians* ſay a *handſome girl* is born *married*: but this is not always true of the *vain*, and ſtill leſs of the *profligate*; nor would *beauty* be *generally* ſo *much prized*, or ſo *often abuſed*, if it were conſidered as ſubject to a *heavy tax*, from the danger it is expoſed to.

" *Beauty, thou art a fair, but fading flow'r,*
" *The tender prey of ev'ry coming hour:*
" *In youth, thou comet-like, art gaz'd upon,*
" *But art portentous to thyſelf alone!*"

In tracing effects back to their cauſes, it ſeems very reaſonable to conclude that many of our *unhappy proſtitutes* would

would have been in the full enjoyment of all thoſe *comforts*, which their natural advantages afforded them, had they been better inſtructed in the great duty of *reconciling themſelves to the condition in which Providence had placed them*. Few women of low fortunes have power to adventure much, except *in love*; but to one that aſpires high, and ſucceeds, five hundred fall as ſacrifices.

Every father has it in his power to breed up his children in the *fear of God*, but if he can afford them a good education, it ſhould be his taſk to give his daughters *maſculine* ſenſe, as well as *feminine delicacy*; and tho' learning, properly ſo called, is out of the queſtion, he ought to inſtil as noble ideas in their minds as in thoſe of his ſons: *childiſh* fears and *fantaſtic* hopes ſhould be ever eſteemed *as childiſh*; and both in *high* life and in *low*, there is juſt the ſame motives to diſtinguiſh *good* and *evil*.

In the *fooliſhneſs* of mens hearts they are apt to entertain an opinion of a *ſuperiority* over *women*, very different from that which the *author of nature* has appointed; and for want of a *proper* deference or conſideration for the ſex, as *creatures accountable for their own actions*, men are not under ſuch awe, as this conſideration would excite, and are therefore betrayed into *tranſgreſſions*, which they would not otherwiſe have committed. Whether a man's principle be *honor* or *religion*, he may run a riſk in *his own perſon*, which he would not chuſe to do, if it *involved* another.

Virtue

Virtue has the ſame charms to captivate the hearts of *women*; and *religon* the ſame power to create a deteſtation of vice and folly in their minds, as in ours; nor do the *diſtinctions of fortune*, I apprehend, make any difference in the ſight of God: but if we neglect to give them principles, and then abuſe the powers of *language* and *reaſon*, which *thoſe diſtinctions* may give us, to pervert the minds of the *illiterate*, the crime is *double*.

Whatever thoſe who have examined only the *foul corners* of the heart, or pryed only into the *darkeſt* ſcenes of *iniquity*, may believe of women who have wandered far from *the paths of virtue*, there is a *native ingenuouſneſs* in the minds of many, even of theſe proſtitutes, that inclines them to wiſh for the means of returning again to their duty. *Cuſtom* and *habit* indeed take off ſome part of the force of *miſery* itſelf, and the heart which does not burſt with a ſenſe of injuries, frequently becomes *callous* and *inſenſible* of them. This muſt be the caſe of many *proſtitutes*, or they could not be ſo blind to their own *ſad condition*: they would diſcover the *extravagance* of revenging upon themſelves the *crimes* of others; or if they were conſcious their misfortunes were owing to their own *indiſcretion*, they would find but very little reaſon *to live in infamy*, becauſe their *paſſions* once betrayed them. The *crime* of the child is apt to occaſion a *crime* in the parent, and *love*, or *luſt*, or *folly*, is not worſe on one ſide, than *fierce anger* on the other. So many dreadful misfortunes would not happen, if the parent or the friend thought of the *temptation* as well as of the *crime*, and conſidered that when

when young women are left to ſtruggle with the *tyranny of bawds*, and the *inſolence of debauchees*, followed cloſe by a train of evils, *infamy*, *poverty* and *diſeaſe*, they muſt die a *miſerable death*, *without the leaſt chance* of *repentance*.

If their *crimes* are black, and their *folly* great, their *miſery* keeps pace with both. It is no ſecret, either to the *virtuous* or the *vicious*, that many proſtitutes are ſo much a diſgrace to human nature, that they are in a *worſe condition* than even the *brute* that periſhes. Every other *animal* is obedient to his *appetite*, but appetite has frequently no ſhare in the *promiſcuous* commerce of theſe women. It is obſerved, that notwithſtanding the reputed humanity of this nation, *harlots* are not treated with ſuch *groſs indignities* in any country as in this; ſo that one would almoſt wonder, how it happens that the ſame *pride*, which led many of them into the ſnare, does not induce more of them to *forſake* their evil courſe, *at all adventures*.—Every one muſt ſee, from this ſingle circumſtance, how much this execrable *habit enſlaves* the mind. And as there is no nation which carries every thing that is *vile*, as well as every thing that is *virtuous*, higher than this, there is no city in the world, where greater enormities prevail, than in this vaſt metropolis.

There is an elegancy in *vice* as well as in *virtue*, and though it is the more *dangerous*, in a religious view, on this account, yet ſtill it is a ſafe-guard againſt thoſe *diſorders* to which a *brutiſh* and *profligate* life expoſes mankind. There is a certain *delicacy* of manners eſſential to *good order* in virtuous life; and the diſtinctions which the

ſexes

ſexes ſhow to each other, is one great means of ſupporting that *order*. It is therefore the more ſhocking to *ſee* theſe women treated like *dogs*; and to *hear* thoſe tongues, which the *God of nature* deſigned ſhould ſoften the *diſtreſſes* of human life, and give a reliſh to its joys, uttering the *higheſt indecencies*, and the moſt *dreadful imprecations!* That which excites our *commiſeration*, may alſo rouſe our *reſentments*: there are ſome of theſe *wretched women*, who being under no awe of the *magiſtrate*, forget all *diſtinctions*; and being heated with liquor, *hang* upon the *virtuous* as well as the *vicious*, and ſometimes, I fear, *drag* along with them thoſe who had no intention to become their prey: in the mean while the *modeſt matron* is offended as ſhe paſſes along; and the *innocent virgin* often ſuffers the violence of hearing the language of the ſtews. Every one feels with ſorrow the want of *common decency and good order*. Theſe are evils which call for redreſs; and if they cannot be *removed*, they may be *mitigated*.

If we conſider theſe young perſons as born in a *free* country, where *pure* religion is profeſſed; ſome of them educated in the principles of *virtue*; all of them entitled to the *protection* of men, and moſt aſſuredly intended by the *wiſe* and *beneficent Father of mankind*, as their *partners* in the *ſocial joys of life*; can we then *turn the glaſs*, and behold them, wicked as they are, the *abject ſlaves* of an abandoned *procureſs*, ſold both *body* and *ſoul* for *half a crown*, without being *fired* with a generous *indignation* for *their cauſe*, and for the *cauſe of humanity!*

We

We ſee, how deplorable *their* circumſtances are, who are thus abandoned; and whilſt there are ſo many *miniſters* of *Lucifer* ſupported in *affluence*, it is no wonder to behold the *victim to luſt* frequently ornamented with *elegancy*, and taught to practiſe all the *blandiſhments* which can infatuate a young man's mind. It may be ſaid of the harlot, that *her ways* do, literally, *lead to the grave*; but the deſtruction of *health*, or even the loſs of life, are not the greateſt evils which happen. As the expences created by the extravagance of a woman, are oftentimes followed by the ſale of a *man's honor* in higher life; *illegal* commerce among men of meaner condition, is often the cauſe of their becoming ſacrifices in the hands of *unſkilful* ſurgeons; whilſt *others*, being no longer able to ſupply by *fair means*, the extravagance of *bad women*, are prompted to commit *deſperate* actions, which bring them to *untimely* death by the hands of juſtice: and I believe it will be found, amongſt *malefactors*, that *two* in *three* are in theſe circumſtances.

But the inſtitution of the *Magdalane Houſe* calls on us alſo to contemplate the ſituation of *parents* with regard to *domeſtic comforts*, and thoſe pleaſing expectations which are often plucked in the bud, and blaſted by the pernicious contrivances of *bawds*. Their *agonies* do not uſually riſe ſo high for their *ſons*, as for their *daughters*; nor does the *fear* of *everlaſting* puniſhment make ſo ſtrong an impreſſion, as the dread of *temporal* evils; but in the *firſt* caſe, the diſtreſs is equal with regard to both: in the *laſt*, the *parent* and the *daughter* are the moſt *pitiable!* If we ſee her deluded by

by the *intrigues* of an *artful ſeducer* who puts on the ſhape of a *ſincere friend*, or an *abandoned procureſs* in the diſguiſe of a *ſaint*: if we follow her through the beaten track, from *guilt* to *diſeaſe*; and behold her languiſhing under a *venereal* complaint, ſtill ſubject to the *arbitrary* will of an *imperious miſtreſs*, who leaps over all the *boundaries of humanity*, to gratify her own *inſatiable* avarice: what a *dreadful ſcene* it exhibits! If we exclude the thoughts of an *hereafter*, ſtill it creates *anguiſh* in his breaſt, who *feels* only *as a man*; and what muſt the *parent feel!* The ingenious Mr. *Dodd* in his firſt ſermon on the *Magdalane Charity* has exhorted us in very *pathetic* terms. Speaking of *parents* he ſays, nearly in theſe words: "Whenever you view the children of your boſom, your *daughters*, like lovely flowers, blooming around you; conſider how often that *very beauty* hath proved a fatal ſnare: conſider how many there are, whoſe *paſſions* have no *law*, and whoſe *luſt* has no *mercy*. And while you are moved to be the more diligent to inſtill every virtue in the minds of your *own children*, let generous *ſympathy* touch your hearts; and join to wipe the tear from the *aged father's* eye, to prevent the hoary head from going down to the grave in *ſorrow*." Many fathers indeed have cauſe to bleſs this charity, as the *happy means* of ſeeing their daughters reſtored to them.

As members of the *civil community*, Mr. *Dodd* alſo exhorts us to unite in this laudable undertaking; which through the zeal of *good men*, and the vigilance of *magiſtrates* may, in due ſeaſon, in ſome degree, waſh away that

nuiſance of our times, *the pollution of our ſtreets.*" And he adds, "ſurely, in every undertaking that has any *tendency* to remove ſuch nuiſance, if we really mean to preſerve *our children*, *our ſervants*, *our dependants* of every kind, in innocence and virtue; if we wiſh to prevent *unſpeakable diſtreſs*, and the moſt *cruel injury*, which the *virtuous* and *guiltleſs* have often found, from the *dire contagion of this promiſcuous defilement*, we ſhould join, in an undertaking of this nature, with hand and heart."

No one who pretends to pity, can be a careleſs ſpectator of ſo noble a part of the workmanſhip of heaven, treated with the *groſſeſt indignity*, and *expiring* under circumſtances the moſt *ſhocking* to humanity. There are *ſcenes* which would draw compaſſion even for the ſufferings of a *brute animal:* and it is too well known, that many a *venerable head* is hurried to a grave by ſuch accidents. This is the caſe with great numbers of *common proſtitutes*; whilſt the greateſt part of thoſe who are pampered in *private*, have ſeldom prudence to make any reſerve for a retreat; and if they do not fall by an early death, they live but a *miſerable life*. And as to thoſe who infeſt the *ſtreets*, they ſpread contagion through a *much greater* part of both the ſexes, than is *generally imagined*; and many a *virtuous woman* has felt the dreadful effects of her *huſband*'s irregularities.

If we take in the whole ſcope and deſign of the *Magdalane* charity, it will be found productive of many *great* and *good* effects. I have ſeen a *great variety of miſery* in various climes, and have been preſent at many *intereſting ſcenes*,

ſcenes, but no incident of life has reached me, more affecting than the relief afforded by this charity to many *unhappy women*. To ſee the *tattered*, *filthy garments* of ſome, whoſe education firſt ſet them above the *lower claſs* of mankind, with the tears which ſeem to flow from *real contrition*: to *hear* the *ſtory* of their wretchedneſs, and their entreaties for *admiſſion*, if we may be allowed to judge from the conduct of many, *after the trial*, it ought to influence the *heart* of the *patriot*, the *philoſopher*, and the *chriſtian*.

Allowing for all the *artfulneſs* which cunning in *little ſouls* can practiſe, there is a native *ingenuouſneſs* in the mind of women far beyond what is generally imagined: this is demonſtrated in the *gratitude* which thoſe often expreſs, who are ſuppoſed to be the moſt abandoned of their ſex. Nor need you take my word for it, the *facts* themſelves give the moſt convincing evidence. The *decent deportment*; the *induſtry*; the regular *private prayers*; the *conſtant attendance at the chapel*: the numbers placed out into *good ſervices*; and above all the *reconciliations* of them to their *parents*, are circumſtances which do honor to the *charity*, as a *chriſtian* inſtitution, as well as to *human nature*. You may reſt aſſured of the *intrinſic* value of the deſign, and with the utmoſt propriety be as true an advocate, for the harlot who is become a *ſober* and *induſtrious chriſtian*, and a *real penitent*, as I have reaſon to be

Your real friend.

On occaſion of an application to obtain a reconciliation between a proſtitute (not in the Magdalane houſe) and her relations.

LETTER X.

To ——

WHAT a *picture* do you give me of *yourſelf!* When you *think*, you find yourſelf *inſupportably* wretched, and when you *do not think*, your moments of pleaſure *vaniſh like a dream.* Were there no *heaven* nor *hell*, could you be in a *worſe ſtate?* There was a time when you uſed to read the *ſcriptures:* have you totally forgotten, that the prophet *Iſaiah* has declared, as from GOD himſelf, that "*there is no peace for the wicked.*" It is ſo ordained by *heaven*; and you find it *experimentally true.* What *proſpect* have you, but a little jollity, the *giddy flights* of a few frantic hours, with the *tranſient gratification* of the *pride* and *vanity* of your *deluded* heart, whilſt every *earthly Being*, endowed with reaſon, *your own companions* not excepted, conſider you as the *out-caſt* of the human race, not worthy even of *pity.*

If you are not thoughtleſs to a degree of *ſtupidity*, you muſt conclude that the loſs of your *beauty* will ſpeedily enſue. *Pale diſeaſe* walks cloſe at the heels of the *infernal* vice you practiſe, and *beauty* muſt wither as *vernal* flowers are nipt by *Eaſtern* blaſts: and with beauty loſt, there will

will be an *encreaſe of your miſery*, whilſt your life is drawing near to an *end*. But what, alas, is *beauty* or *life* in ſuch hands as yours!—And do you believe that *nothing* will follow after death? Do you imagine, *with all your pride*, that you are really no *better* than a *dog*? You cannot think ſo; it is *impoſſible!* and yet if you *live* like *a dog*, you muſt expect to *die like one*, the *puniſhment* of your ſins excepted. I am ſure your *conſcience* tells you that you are in the broad path of deſtruction: and this *monitor* is as clearly intended by nature, for the *preſervation of your ſoul*, as *hunger*, when it calls on you to eat, is to preſerve your *body*. You run the greateſt hazard, every day, of poiſoning your *body* with the venom of a *venereal* diſeaſe; and what ſhall I ſay of your *ſoul*; is it not already poiſoned? Heaven grant it may not be *mortal!* What can be expected if you go on, but that *body* and *ſoul* will ſoon *periſh* together.

Can you *think* of this, and not *tremble*; and can you *tremble* and not fly from the *danger?* It is true; you *weep*, you ſay you are *ſorry* for what is paſt, and you entreat *me* to be *your friend: be a friend to yourſelf*; act like *a reaſonable Being*, and I will be your *friend* and your *advocate* too. If you *prefer miſery and deſtruction*, who can *plead your cauſe?* The very mention of you to your *brother* makes him ſtart back as if he ſaw a *dreadful ſpectre*; at the ſame time that the remembrance of the *love* he once had for you, burſts his heart with *ſorrow*. Do you wiſh to plunge a dagger into his breaſt, as I fear you have already done into your *mother's?* Do you deſire to imbrue your hands in the blood

of your *greateſt benefactors?* If you do, *go on:* be as *wicked* as you can; you may be *ſure of ſucceeding.* It is true that he *ſometimes* ſeems inclined to *hope*, that you have *too much ſenſe* to purſue this *abominable* courſe of life; but then he immediately corrects himſelf, and ſays, "*She has deceived me ſo often, I cannot truſt to her inconſtancy. Her tears are as fantaſtic as her dreſs; and her proteſtations as fallacious, as her life is ſhocking to my imagination!*" And then he adds, "*Good God! is it poſſible that human nature ſhould be ſunk ſo low!*" Sunk it is indeed, in your perſon! and what danger are you in of ſinking into *bottomleſs perdition*, to dwell, for ever, with the *devil* and his angels!

What *can* I ſay to *all this?*—Your *wavering diſcourſe*, and the fluctuating ſentiments contained in *your letter*, which I received yeſterday, make me ſo much at a loſs to know what your reſolutions are, that I beg to be *excuſed* hearing more of you, till you are *determined*; and then I ſhall judge of your *ſincerity* by the proofs you give me of it.

For my own part, I am *convinced* that there is a ſtate of *rewards* and *puniſhments* after death, and that as we have lived *virtuouſly* or *viciouſly*, we ſhall be *happy* or *miſerable* for ever. I reflect with *joy* on the one, and I *tremble* at the other. I conſider life under its moſt *pleaſing* circumſtances, as *a very ſmall object*, compared with *eternity!* But if *you* will purſue *future miſery* and *preſent pain:* if you will *hear* thoſe who mean to make a ſacrifice of you for their own *iniquitous gain*, and *reſolve to* drudge on in the *odious* labor of *proſtitution*, and die as a victim at the

altar

altar of *pollution:* if you *are ſo ſtupid* as not to *ſee* this, or ſo perverſe as to prefer *hell* to *heaven*, *go on:*—what in the *name of mercy* can you *expect* I ſhould do for you?

When I ſee you give proof of being a *chriſtian*, in ſomething more than *name*, it may be in my power to do *you the ſervice* you deſire. Conſider this letter with *attention*, and be *aſſured* that I am ſo far from being reluctant to *intereſt* myſelf for you, that I *grieve* for your condition, and ſhall think myſelf *extremely happy* in giving you the trueſt demonſtrations that I am

Your real friend.

Value of the ſoul. Duties required in the Magdalane houſe.

LETTER XI.

To —— on her being admitted into the Magdalane houſe.

NOTHING could have *aſtoniſhed* me more than that a young woman, educated as you have been, ſhould have ſubmitted to ſo *infamous* a courſe of life, had I not ſeen others, in as good a ſituation, do the ſame, who have not reſolved to forſake it, as you have done. I congratulate you on the choice you have made. The courſe you was running, muſt have ended in *perdition!* You was already arrived at the *verge* of it: Look back at the *precipice*, and rejoice at your eſcape! *Rejoice* as if you had found a *treaſure!* You certainly have found that which

may be of *infinite value* to you, if you improve it in a proper manner.

That there is a providence which governs the world, is visible from its effects; and it is no less obvious to my apprehensions, that it depends on *ourselves*, by the *divine assistance*, to convert the *greatest misery* into the *greatest happiness*. *Without* faith in the *word of God*, there can be *no religion*; and *with* it, you will soon discover that the mercy of that *God* is as *infinite* as his *justice*; and that the *blood* of the great *Prophet* and *Redeemer* of the world was shed for *you*, as much as if you were the only human Being upon earth.

You are now resolved to *make proof of your own heart*, whether you are *sincere*. Do not amuse yourself with any *fond conceit* that there is any *wonder-working* power within the walls of the *Magdalane house*; but remember that the *tree* is known by its *fruits*. To labor with *your hands*, to guard your *tongue*, to correct your *thoughts*, to learn *attention*, how to collect your *wandering thoughts*, and how to worship the *God* that made you, in *spirit* and in *truth*, is the *sum* and *substance* of the task which you have undertaken. *Look well to the performance of every part of it.* To fly from the *world*, is not flying from yourself: You have wisely determined to retreat, you have left your *evil companions*, and the *dangers* which surrounded you from their *influence* and *example*. You are also retired from the moral possibility of committing the sin for which you condemn yourself: *all this is well*; you have *so far* obtained a *victory*; but do not therefore imagine yourself free from

every

every kind of danger. Study your own *foibles:* a *bad temper* ſtands next in order to a *bad heart.* The trueſt proof of your *ſincerity* and *good temper* will be ſeen in a *quiet, kind, obliging* behaviour, and by *patience,* where you think there is provocation to the contrary, if ſuch ſhould happen from the imprudence of any of your companions: there is no merit in avoiding *anger,* where *no provocation* is given; and remember that *pride* and *anger,* which generally wait on each other, are oftentimes the cauſe of womens going *aſtray;* and that without *humility* and *meekneſs* they cannot be reſtored again. It is often obſerved, that the *pride* of appearing above your rank and condition, joined to the *reſentments* of ſome *real* or *ſuppoſed* injury, drives many *young women* headlong into *perdition.* If this is not your caſe, it has been of ſome of your companions, and *ſuch paſſions are hard to be reduced.* Let me therefore entreat you to conſider your own infirmities, and learn, not only how to be *compaſſionate,* but how to *correct* others, by your example. *Temperance* and *moderation* are acts of *juſtice,* particularly in your ſituation. *Humility, meekneſs* and *charity,* with an *entire reſignation* of your *will* and *affections* to *God,* will lead you to the practice of thoſe graces, which adorn the mind of a *chriſtian,* and are the genuine marks by which a *true chriſtian* is known.

If you are *in earneſt,* as I truſt you are, you may be ſure of meeting all the countenance which the nature of the *charity* admits: the *gentlemen* who have taken it under their care, *are very much in earneſt on their part,* and

it

it will give me great pleaſure if I can be of any *ſervice* to you. I ſend you a book entitled, *Thoughts* on the Plan of the *Magdalane Charity*; alſo a *Sermon*, which is more intereſting, the laſt being written by the much-admired Mr. *Dodd*. You will be ſupplied with a *teſtament*, and a *common-prayer book*. For *God's ſake* read them attentively: *low* as your condition is, your *ſoul* is of no leſs importance to you, than that of the *greateſt monarch* upon earth to him, and both are of *equal value in the ſight of God*. This you will be truly ſenſible of, when you ſit down to read the ſcriptures, not as an *irkſome taſk*, as you probably conſidered it at ſchool, but as *the hiſtory of divine mercy, the great law of life, the inſtructor to avoid eternal miſery, and the infallible guide to everlaſting happineſs*.

You may imagine that you know this already, but your *knowledge* never reached your *heart*, or you would not have gone ſuch deſperate lengths in wickedneſs. You *know* that the *Son of God died for you*, but how little attention have you ſhown to this *awful conſideration!*—You *confeſs* that for ſome time paſt you dared not attend the *public worſhip*, leſt it ſhould be *mockery* for a perſon in your circumſtances to ſupplicate for mercy.—*True* it is indeed; but, *good God*, how *dreadfully* true! What *ravage* does vice make in the ſoul! Think of the *dangers* you have eſcaped; and ſhun the moſt *diſtant approaches* of temptation for the future. Arm yourſelf at all points to reſiſt it, whatever diſguiſe it may put on. I truſt in God you will act up to the *profeſſions* you make, and I wiſh you ſucceſs. I am, *&c.*

Tem-

Temperance, diet, health, and conformity to the rules.

LETTER XII.

To the ſame.

YOU who have known what it is to live in eaſe under the eye of an *indulgent* parent, having neglected that bleſſing, and forgotten your duty to the *God* that made you, ought in all reaſon to expect to *ſuffer*; but your *preſent ſufferings*, compared with your *paſt guilt*, hardly deſerve the name of *ſufferings*. It is the great end of *chriſtianity* to keep *reaſon* upon her throne, and reduce our *paſſions* and *appetites* to ſubjection, that mortifying our *ſinful* affections, we may with the deepeſt *humility* receive the *great doctrine of the redemption of mankind*: but it is not poſſible that this can be done unleſs the mind is *prepared* for it. In order to this end, it is evident we muſt command the appetite of *hunger* and *thirſt*, that the gratification of it may ſerve the purpoſes of ſupporting life, not the indulgence of it to deſtroy *life* or *health*. This holds equally ſtrong with regard to the other appetite, I mean *luſt*; the one relating merely to our *own preſervation*, the other to the *continuance of the ſpecies*. That this laſt may not be, in the promiſcuous manner of *beaſts*, nor create *ſavageneſs*, *blood*, and *confuſion*, as it probably would do; and for thoſe weighty reaſons, which reſpect an *after account*, we find that the wiſe

wiſe author of nature has appointed the *conditions* of this gratification; and all wiſe legiſlators, in obedience to the divine law, have made the *violation* of thoſe conditions in ſome degree penal; whilſt *infamy*, *diſgrace*, *diſeaſe*, or a total *perverſion of will* are annexed to ſuch violation. The government of this *appetite* ſeems to be moſt remarkably diſtinguiſhed as one of the chief *criterions to judge of mens obedience to the divine laws*; and above all, *chriſtianity*, which moſt *dignifies* and exalts human nature, has moſt attentively guarded againſt the breach of this law.

Our *paſſions* and *appetites* depend much on our *ſenſes*, and our ſenſes depend very much on our *aliment*. She who with *ſimple plain diet*, without exceſs in *quantity*, might have continued *chaſte*, ſuppoſing the temptations equal; with *another kind of diet* may have become a *prey to incontinency*. You have often ſeen *drunkenneſs* and *lewdneſs* alternately follow each other: if the *mind* is deprived of *reaſon*, it is natural to ſuppoſe the *body* will loſe its power of reſiſtance of *moral evil*; and be *ſubſervient* to another's *appetite* even beyond what we ſee in *beaſts*. And if the *conſciouſneſs* of paſt guilt diſturbs the mind, we ſee many have recourſe to the means of *extinguiſhing* reaſon, by the fumes of liquor, making the *remedy* worſe than the *diſeaſe*. This plain reaſoning is not ſufficiently attended to, in common life, but the fact is ſo, and on this account *temperance* is recommended, and even *enjoined* by chriſtianity, in a much greater degree than *chriſtians practiſe*, or generally *acknowledge*.

Regard

Regard muſt be had to the *quality* of our food, of which *experience* is generally the beſt guide: and we frequently obſerve that there are ſome kinds, which being of an *indifferent* nature to *one* perſon, to *another* it is a crime to uſe them, as their effects are known to be pernicious: this is particularly demonſtrated in the uſe of *ſpirituous liquors*: the ſame holds with regard to the *quantity* as to the *quality* of our food. It is remarked, that a *liquoriſh mouth* is often attended with a *laſcivious diſpoſition*. *Temperance* and *chaſtity* are almoſt ſynonymous terms, and ſo are *intemperance* and *impurity*, though they rather attend, or follow each other, than mean the ſame thing: at the ſame time *anger* cannot be more repugnant to chriſtian *meekneſs*, than *intemperance* to chriſtian *purity*. Were we to conſider how ſublime a virtue *temperance* is, and how certain the reward which accompanies it, were it only on account of the charms of *health*, we ſhould be almoſt tempted to pay it *divine honors*. It is to *temperance* we owe *health*; and *health* is to the *body* what *virtue* is to the *ſoul*; whilſt *diſeaſe*, like *ſin*, binds the conqueror in chains, and makes the *monarch* often wiſh for death.

" AUSPICIOUS HEALTH *appear'd on Zephyr's wings*;
" *She ſeem'd a cherub moſt divinely bright,*
" *More ſoft than air, more gay than morning light.*
" *Hail blooming goddeſs! thou propitious pow'r,*
" *Whoſe bleſſings mortals next to life implore*;

" *With*

" *With ſo much luſtre your bright looks endear,*
" *The cottages are courts when thoſe appear.*
" *Mankind, as you vouchſafe to ſmile or frown,*
" *Find eaſe in chains, or anguiſh in a crown.*"

To point out to you the intimate connection of *virtue*, *happineſs*, and *induſtry*, you may *plainly* perceive that health hardly depends more on *temperance*, than on *exerciſe*. In this reſpect the *poor*, being conſtrained to *labor*, are upon that very account frequently more *happy* than the *rich*. The *order of nature* muſt be obſerved without regard to the diſtinctions of *fortune*. " Providence furniſhes materials, but expects that we ſhould work them up for ourſelves. The earth muſt be *labored* before it gives its *increaſe*; and when it is forced into its ſeveral products, how many hands muſt they paſs through before they are fit for uſe? *Manufactures*, *trade*, and *agriculture*, naturally employ more than *nineteen* parts of the ſpecies in *twenty*; and as for thoſe who are not obliged to labor, by the condition in which they are born, they are more *miſerable* than the reſt of mankind, unleſs they indulge themſelves in that voluntary labor which they call by the name of *exerciſe*." Again, " If *exerciſe* throws off all ſuperfluities, *temperance* prevents them; if *exerciſe* clears the veſſels, *temperance* neither ſatiates nor overſtrains them; if *exerciſe* raiſes proper ferments in the humors, and promotes the circulation of the blood, *temperance* gives nature her *full play*, and enables her to exert herſelf in all her

her *force* and *vigor*; if *exerciſe* diſſipates a growing diſtemper, *temperance* ſtarves it."

You may obſerve further among the moſt *ſprightly* and *virtuous* part of both ſexes, that nothing is ſo repugnant to their *temper* and *diſpoſitions* as *idleneſs*, and nothing ſo contrary to the inclinations of the *vicious*, as *induſtry*. Idleneſs is a certain proof of a *vicious unworthy mind*, ſince it is obvious that if we do *nothing* for *ourſelves*, nor for *any body* elſe, we can have *no right* to require any thing at their hands to be done for us: the conſequence of which would be, that we ſhould *die of hunger*. And hence you may learn how diſtant it is from the deſign of nature, that any ſhould get their bread by ſo vile an employment as *proſtitution*. *Temperance*, *health*, *induſtry*, and *virtue*, thus hang on each other, and are link'd by a chain, not to be ſeparated, more than true *ſelf-love* and *ſocial virtue*, which appear to be one and the ſame object.

"*Health conſiſts with temperance alone,*
"*And peace, O virtue! peace is all thy own!*"

Thoſe who underſtand how to live, know alſo that whatever adminiſters to *health* adminiſters to *pleaſure*, and ſhe who in purſuit of *pleaſure* ſacrifices her *health*, may be ſaid to give herſelf up to *pain*, not *pleaſure*. The laſt is the *ſad caſe* of many a *harlot*, and indeed of all mankind who miſtake their *end*, and hunt after *pleaſure* inſtead of *happineſs*, and purſue *enjoyments* not conſiſtent with *virtue*.

You

You muſt be ſenſible that it would be equally abſurd and impolitic to feed women, in your circumſtances, with *delicate* fare; but you have abundantly ſufficient, and it is *good* of its kind *. Your bed has no *curtains*, but neither is it expoſed to any wind that can offend you; and you draw in ſo much the purer air whilſt you ſleep. It is not of *down*, but it is *ſoft* enough, and indeed ſo much the better for health; and it is *large* enough for one perſon to ſleep in.

Whilſt I recommend to you a moſt *grateful* acceptance of ſuch *fare* as the *houſe* affords, let me conjure you, as you mean to be a *gueſt* in it, that you pay a *chearful* and *willing obedience* to the *rules* it requires. Farewel.

* There is an allowance of bread baked in the houſe, not ſo white, but much ſweeter and purer than the common bakers ſupply. It is intended alſo to brew, and their ſmall-beer is given out by *allowance*. They have butter, cheeſe, water gruel, milk porridge, *mutton*, *beef*, &c. in ſuch portions as are ſufficient, and it is remarkable that moſt of the women in the houſe grow fat with a diet ſo much more *regular*, as well as *ſimple*, than they have been accuſtomed to.

On prayer.

LETTER XIII.

To the ſame.

I Have given you my opinion upon ſome circumſtances of the conduct neceſſary to be obſerved in your preſent ſituation: and I hope, if you have your own happineſs at heart, *my labor* will not be loſt.

To form a true judgment of ourſelves, we ſhould conſtantly attend to the motions of our own hearts, nor even in the intervals between ſleeping and waking, ſhould we leave ourſelves *unguarded.* There is a *lurking ſpirit* within us, which is ever *watchful* of all opportunities, of diverting our thoughts from the true objects of our happineſs; not only preventing our thinking of what we ſhould think, but alſo ſuggeſting *ideas* which we would wiſh to *baniſh far from us.* There is no method of encountering this *buſy ſpirit* ſo well as by proper *words*, the repetition of which may turn the *current* of our *thoughts.* Let me therefore entreat you to learn ſuch *prayers*, *ejaculations*, and *pious ſoliloquys*, as may be ready at your tongue's end, on every occaſion. Happy would it be for mankind, if this ſimple rule were well obſerved: it would be as a *fortreſs* to the ſoul, and a preparation for its *defence* in all dangers. We muſt *learn* how to *think* as occaſions ariſe; and we have no leſs authority than

the *Son of God himſelf*, that we *ſhould alſo learn how to pray*.

It is an eſſential part of the *diſcipline* of the houſe, that beſides the *devotion of the chapel*, the *ſuperior* of the ward ſhould *pray* aloud, for a ſhort time, to thoſe under her care, juſt before they go to reſt: and as ſleep is *an image of death*, my *advice* is, that you always familiarize *death* to your mind when you retire to ſleep. Aſk your own heart if you are *ready*, if ſo it ſhould pleaſe heaven; for whether it be *ſleeping* or *waking*, in the *night* or *day*, in your *full ſenſes*, or deprived of them; *die* you muſt, and no time is ſo proper to think of it *attentively* * as when we are about to *ſleep*. If we are thus prepared to die, of conſequence we cannot be *ſurprized*; and *life* under ſuch circumſtances will be always *pleaſing*: ſo far from creating any *gloomineſs* of mind, every thing will be joyful; ſince even death itſelf will be robbed of all its arrows, and appear as a *friend*: you will *reliſh* every *morſel* you eat, and there will be no *bitter mixture of fear* in your cup. To know how *prayer* will operate on the mind, in this *important* inſtance, can only be *diſcovered* by the experiment: but we may be *morally certain* of the ſucceſs *if we try*.

Tho' reaſon and experience give us ſufficient evidence of our own *preſent wretchedneſs* and *indigence*, the conſideration of the *immortality* of the ſoul ſeems to be the *ſtrongeſt* motive to *prayer*. We cannot tell what *infinite* happineſs or *infinite* miſery include in them: all things are now *limited* and have

* See thoughts on death, vol. 1. page 124.

have an *end*, yet we know enough of *preſent happineſs* to ſeek it at the hazard of *life*; and language fails in the expreſſion of the preſent miſery which we often *ſuffer*: and to believe in a *future* ſtate, and yet divide the *preſent life* from it, is an *abſurdity in terms*. Man in his beſt condition, without *hopes* beyond the *preſent moment*, is a *wretched maſs of contradiction*, ſince it is a part of his very nature, to *think*; and to *hope* for ſome diſtant good. But it has been well obſerved, that if we never acknowledge the enjoyments and privileges which we have *received*, and *hold of God*, we in effect deny that we receive them from him; and if we do not *petition* him for a ſupply of our wants, we either *deny thoſe wants*, or *his power* of helping us. "If," ſays an ingenious author, "I ſhould "*never pray to God*, nor *worſhip* him, ſuch a total omiſ-"ſion would be equivalent to this aſſertion, *there is no* "*God who governs the world, to be adored.* And if I neg-"lect this duty *generally*, though not *always*, if it does "not directly proclaim the *ſame abſurdity*, yet it is a "proof that I am *indifferent* about it: for certainly to "worſhip God after this manner, is only to worſhip "him *accidentally*; which is to declare it as an *accident* "that he is worſhipped at all; and this alſo approaches "to a total neglect. Beſides, ſuch a ſparing and *unfre-*"*quent worſhip of the deity* betrays ſuch an *habitual diſ-*"*regard* of him, as muſt needs render every religious "act *inſignificant*, and of no effect."

Nothing can be more apparent than the DUTY OF PRAYER to be offered up at ſtated times, *morning*

and *evening*; and thoſe who have a deep ſenſe of *religion* will find it a very familiar taſk, if they ſend up a ſhort prayer at *noon day*. Some have better opportunity for this than others, from their ſituation in life; but every one may pauſe, for half a minute, without injury to the buſineſs of the world, or the imputation of *enthuſiaſm*.

To pray with the *underſtanding*, as well as the *tongue*, and the *heart*, conſtitutes the moſt *eſſential part of religion*: for how can we give any proof that our *wills* and *affections* are right with *God*; or how *can* they be *right*, if we never refer ourſelves to him, but in a mere *formal inanimate worſhip*, where the *body only* is concerned, and hardly that? "*The ſacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the Lord, but the prayer of the upright is his delight.*"

Many perſons who are not generally denominated *wicked*, are yet ſo *careleſs*, and ſo unaccuſtomed to pray in private, that they hardly think it an eſſential part of religion. But if there is any thing in the *life of man*, about which he ought to be *ſerious*, it muſt be in his addreſſes to the *God of life*, on whom his *preſent* and *everlaſting happineſs* depends. Whilſt the whole hoſts of heaven are ſinging *hallelujahs* to their great creator: whilſt the *heavens* rejoice, and all animate nature ſmiles with *gladneſs*, ſhall man be *ſilent?* Shall he content himſelf with an *indolent paſſive belief of a God*, and dependance on his *Providence*; or make uſe of all proper opportunities, to ſhew the impreſſion which this belief makes on his mind? The integrity of our *words* and *actions* do indeed

ſanctify

ſanctify our lives, and is an excellent preparative for *prayer:* if we *live well*, it is probable we ſhall *pray well*; but if we *pray ill*, or not at all, how will our *laſt long reckoning* ſtand? how will it be perplexed with *errors*, *omiſſions*, and *wilful faults!* If we do not account often with *our own hearts*, fairly and diſtinctly, how ſhall we appear at the bar of a judge, whoſe *wiſdom* and *juſtice* are *infinite*, and who requires the improvement of our *talents?* And ſurely the nobleſt talent committed to us, is the *power*, of addreſſing *our ſupplications to the Almighty!*

"*Keep thy foot when thou goeſt into the houſe of God,* "*and be more ready to hear than to give the ſacrifice of* "*fools, for they conſider not that they do evil.*" The preacher immediately explains himſelf by adding, "*Be not raſh* "*with thy mouth, and let not thy heart be haſty to utter any* "*thing before God, for God is in heaven, and thou upon* "*earth, therefore let thy words be few.*" Never dare to kneel before your maker in a *trifling* manner. The admonition, "*not to utter any thing,*" muſt needs imply a direction to make *a good choice of words, as well as ſentiments*, and not to truſt to *extemporary* compoſitions, or words taken up haſtily, on the ſpot.

There are very few perſons qualified to pray without a *form of prayer*. From a fond opinion of praying *with the ſpirit*, they are apt to pray *without underſtanding*, or *common ſenſe*. I once heard a *methodiſt* ſay, there was no occaſion of any *form of prayer*, to thoſe who had the *new birth*; and indeed it ſhould ſeem in general that human nature muſt be *changed* before the common race of

mortals will be able to addreſs their maker properly, without a *form of prayer*; and the Son of God himſelf has recommended a *form*. You will find in the *common liturgy* of our church the prayers are moſt admirably compoſed, and equally well adapted to *one* perſon, as to a congregation. It ſeems impoſſible to make prayers without figures drawn from ſenſe; but when theſe are *ſcriptural*, and applied with *judgment*, without leaning too much to the *hyperbolical ſtrain*, they are generally the moſt *eſteemable*: and in this particular, there is a peculiar *dignity* and *ſimplicity* in our liturgy.

So far from *all forms being uſeleſs*, I apprehend that great aſſiſtance is to be drawn in *public prayer*, from keeping the *eye* generally fixed on the book: this will prevent its wandering to other objects; our recollection of what we are about, will be the ſtronger: it will check the *imagination*, and help to drive from our minds *ideas* of things foreign to our *prayers*. The book alſo helps us very much, to make the *reſponſes* regularly. In public we are aſſiſted by the *joint ſupplications* of others; whilſt the *place* adds a ſanctity to the deed, and the *incenſe* derives a peculiar favor, which muſt be the more acceptable at the throne of heaven.

If you mean to offer up your heart to God with ſincerity, *meditate* a little, before you fall down before him, and riſe up before you have *loſt yourſelf in abſence*. If after *ſaying* your prayers *in private* you are conſcious that you forgot yourſelf, and only *ſaid them, not prayed*; rouſe your attention; rally the *powers* of your mind; return to your duty,

duty, and *diſcharge it well*, tho' it were but for *half a minute*. There are not many perſons who can be attentive to *prayer*, for any *long time*; but a *habit of inattention*, in this inſtance, is *abominable*; it converts an *infirmity* into *wickedneſs*. You will find that *attention* depends on *habit*; alſo on *time* and *ſeaſon*, that we be free from *interruption* or *intruſion* of any kind: it depends likewiſe, in ſome meaſure, on maturity of age, alſo on *temperance*, and ſomething alſo on *health* and *conſtitution*; but above all, on *a good mind*.

Whether your prayers be *ſhort* or *long*, if you are not *attentive* to them *yourſelf*, can you think that *God* will be *attentive* to them? Will they not be the *ſacrifice of fools*, or the mere *breath* of your noſtrils, in the ſight of him who ſearches *the ſpirit*, and requires to be worſhipped in *ſpirit* and in *truth*? but he knoweth whereof we are made, and does not require *long prayers*. Be therefore *deliberate*; let not your *tongue* out-run your *thoughts*, but attend to the *ſenſe* of your words. For the ſame reaſon *moderate the warmth of your paſſions*: worſhip GOD with *fervent calmneſs*, for fervency and calmneſs are certainly conſiſtent, but *tranſport* weakens, and ſometimes deſtroys the *powers* of *the mind*, or ſubſtitutes *paſſion* in the place of *reaſon*.

Some are aſſiſted in their devotion by repeating their words ſo *diſtinct*, that they can *hear themſelves ſpeak*: but they ſhould be cautious not to diſturb others, if they pray in company, or in a *congregation*.

There is a meaſure in all things; you can hardly be too *attentive*, nor is it poſſible to be *too ſincere*; but we ſometimes miſtake the *warmth of our blood* for *the greateſt piety of heart.*

Where the memory is defective, the uſe of a *book* is of great conſequence, even in *private* prayer; but *young perſons* eaſily learn by heart whatever they ſet about. — If you ſhould have occaſion, at any time, to *pray aloud to others*, it is neceſſary to conſider the *force of* every expreſſion, and where to lay the proper *emphaſis*. You may do more eſſential ſervice to the hearts of your audience in *a minute*, than is frequently done in an *hour*. And it is as neceſſary to pray with a true cadence, as to the *ſound of words*, as to *ſing* with *a true harmony*. It is with *reading* and *praying*, as it is with *muſic*; our *ears* are offended when there is *no harmony*. *A right underſtanding of our ſubject, joined to attention*, naturally lead to juſtneſs in the ſound of words; as juſtneſs in ſound, leads to a true ſenſe. You have often heard *a manner* of expreſſion which creates *awe*, and fills the heart with the *piety of an angel*; and another manner, which makes us apt to *forget* to whom we are addreſſing ourſelves, if it does *no worſe*.

It is no leſs obvious, that as we conſiſt of *body* and *ſoul*, we muſt *glorify God in both*. Nor indeed ought we to enter the *houſe of God*, I mean for *public prayer*, with *bows* and *courteſies* to each other; but with a mind imploring his *holy Spirit* to help our *infirmities*.

In *hearing the ſcriptures* read, or a *ſermon* preached, apply them as cloſely to yourſelf, as if they related to *no other perſon*, and treaſure up what is ſaid in your *heart* and *memory*.

'Tis a great misfortune, I think, that in *our churches* more care is not taken about the *harmony* and *devotional* part of pſalm ſinging, though in numerous inſtances it is of the utmoſt conſequence, particularly with reſpect to a great part of the common people: let your *underſtanding* and your *heart* regulate the *muſic* of your voice, that your *ſpirit*, as well as *your tongue*, may rejoice.

In *receiving the ſacrament remember* what you ſhould at no time *forget*; but now particularly *call to mind* the *inexpreſſible love of him whoſe life and death you commemorate*; and with whom you enter into a new compact to obey his *precepts*. And if he loved us, even unto *death*, what ought to be the warmth of our *charity* to our fellow-creatures, on this occaſion!

In *repeating your creed*, obſerve what it is you *profeſs to believe*; and occaſionally ſtudy and contemplate every *article* of it, that you may always *act* as if you *believe*, what you declare ſo often in the *houſe of God*, and in the preſence of *your* Maker, that you *do* believe.

Incloſed I ſend you a *little book* entitled, *Directions* for a devout and decent behaviour at church, which is ſimple, and well digeſted: alſo a TABLE pointing out the ſeveral ſubjects of the *church prayers* and the *pſalms*. For want of theſe aſſiſtances I believe many have but *confuſed ideas* of the book they read, and out of which they pray,

pray, from their childhood to the grave, and often die without this *examination*, though it is obvious enough; and certainly this method enhances the value of the book very greatly. I alſo ſend you ſome *religious meditations*, which hardly deſerve the name of *prayers*; likewiſe ſome *petitions* to *heaven*, the language of which being more *ſcriptural*, you may call them *prayers*, if you pleaſe, and uſe them as you may find *moſt proper*. We find ſo many good prayers, made to our hands, in the *common liturgy*, that we need be the leſs concerned about others, except for *particular occaſions*, with which perhaps you are already provided. Let me entreat you to conſider well the great merit of our liturgy; and to ſtudy it in the manner the *table*, above mentioned, will enable you to do; and what is I ſuppoſe in this reſpect *right* for you, in the *Magdalane houſe*, I can hardly think to be leſs right *for any perſon* in any *other houſe*. Farewel.

DIRECTIONS

FOR A

Devout and Decent Behaviour

IN THE

PUBLIC WORSHIP of GOD*.

ſent with Letter XIII.

"THERE are too many call themſelves chriſtians, who come not to church at all, or very ſeldom, notwithſtanding our religion, and the laws of our country, require of us to worſhip God in public. And even of thoſe who do come, we find many behaving themſelves in a careleſs manner, as if the worſhip of GOD were either not the buſineſs they came about, or not worth minding.—Some *ſit* all the time of prayers, contrary to common decency; whilſt others put themſelves into ſuch lazy and irreverent poſtures, as ſhew they have *no ſenſe* of their duty; no awe on their minds; no reverence for the glorious Being they come to addreſs. Some lay themſelves *to ſleep*, or trifle away the time in thinking of their worldly affairs. Others *gaze* and *ſtare* about upon the congregation, or keep *talking* and whiſpering with their neigh-

* *Sold by Mr. Dodd in Ave Mary Lane. The above is altered in ſome parts from the book ſold.*

neighbours. This is obſervable particularly whilſt the *leſſons* are reading; as if the holy ſcriptures, tho' given by *inſpiration* of GOD, were not always to be *heard, and digeſted*, nor the end for which they were written, regarded, though deſigned to be *profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, and inſtruction in righteouſneſs.*

With reſpect to ſuch cold and careleſs worſhippers, we may apply to the church what *Jacob* ſaid of *Bethel*; *Surely the Lord is in this place, and they know it not.* They do not *conſider*, that they are in the immediate preſence of GOD, and that by ſuch a behaviour they affront him *to his face*, while they ſhould be devoutly attending to his *word*, or *praying to him* with humble ſupplication.

Others there are, who ſhew ſome inclination to mind the prayers, and the reſt of the ſervice; but they do it with ſo much *ignorance, diſtraction*, or *confuſion*, as diſcover that they do not rightly underſtand the difference betwixt one part of the ſervice and another; nor conſider, that ſome are *prayers*, ſome *praiſes* and *thankſgivings*, ſome public *profeſſions* of the chriſtian faith, and ſome no more than *inſtructions, commands*, or *exhortations* to the people. We often find them repeating after the *miniſter*, what he *alone* ſhould ſpeak, and *they* ſhould only *hearken* to. They are alſo apt, when they join in the prayers, to ſay them, after him, ſo *loud*, as muſt needs be troubleſome, and diſturb thoſe that are near them.

Now that ſuch well-diſpoſed perſons may be taught how to order their devotions better; and to worſhip GOD not only with the *ſpirit*, but with *underſtanding* alſo, the

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following directions are earneſtly recommended to their *conſideration* and *practice*.

Firſt then, have a conſcientious regard to this *advice* of *Solomon*, (to whom GOD gave a *wiſe and underſtanding heart*;) *Keep thy foot when thou goeſt to the houſe of* GOD; and ſo look to every ſtep you take in your approach to it, that you come into his more *immediate* preſence with ſuch *contemplations*, *meditations*, and *reflections* in your mind; as will *lift up your ſoul unto him*, under an awful and juſt ſenſe of his *divine majeſty and perfections*; and with that *humble* and *contrite ſpirit*, which dependent creatures and *miſerable ſinners*, ought to have.

Remember, that as GOD is a *ſpirit*, your worſhip of him muſt be ſpiritual and reaſonable, ſincere and pure. It muſt flow from a divine and heavenly frame of mind. But as the *whole man* conſiſts of *body* and *ſoul* together, you muſt *glorify* him in *both*; and, conſidering their natural union and *ſympathy*, you muſt take ſuch heed to every geſture and poſture of your body, as that they may be ſuch as will beſt expreſs your humility, reverence, and earneſtneſs, and keep up *ſuitable* thoughts and affections in your ſoul. Therefore you will conclude, that a *kneeling poſture* is moſt proper; being that which *nature* ſeems to dictate, in *ſolemn adorations* and *humble confeſſions*, even without an expreſs call for it, from the inſpired Pſalmiſt, who ſays, *O come, let us worſhip, and fall down, and kneel before the Lord our Maker*.

Secondly, If you are thus prepared to *worſhip* GOD in *ſpirit* and in *truth*, you will go early to his houſe, ſo as

to

to be there at the very beginning of the ſervice: ſince the ſame obligation lies upon you to attend every part of his public worſhip, as to come to church at all. If you miſs the *beginning* of it, you loſe the opportunity of *confeſſing your ſins*, and the comfort of hearing your pardon declared and pronounced to you; and by coming late, you *diſturb* the congregation to make way for you. Take care alſo not to leave the church, without great neceſſity, nor till after the miniſter has given the *bleſſing* that concludes the whole ſervice; for if you go out before, you will ſhow a *bad example* and ſeem to deſpiſe the *bleſſing*; and if you do ſo, you cannot expect the *grace* and *peace* of GOD ſhould go along with you.

Thirdly, Having a convenient opportunity, after your entrance into the church, *fall down* upon your knees in *private* prayer to GOD, for the aſſiſtance of his Spirit in thoſe ſolemn duties of religion you come to perform, in ſome proper words, as, "*O Lord* let thy *holy Spirit* help mine *infirmities*, and diſpoſe my heart to the moſt ſincere devotion, that I may improve this opportunity to the honor of thy name, and the benefit of my ſoul, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake." It is thus you will be led to conſider him as obſerving what you *think*, as well as what you *ſay* and *do*; and take care that the *inward* diſpoſition of your *ſoul*, and the *outward* demeanor of your *body*, be ſuch as becometh, not only the *holineſs* and *worſhip of his houſe*, but alſo his more *immediate preſence*.

When you *pray* fix your thoughts wholly upon GOD, who alone *heareth prayer*; diſengage your mind from all worldly

worldly concerns; keep your eyes from wandring, and your lips from disturbing others in their devotions.

In Thanksgiving,

Imprint upon your heart a just and lively sense of the goodness and loving kindness of God to yourself, and to all men; you will then *feel how joyful and pleasant a thing it is, to be thankful.*

In hearing the Scripture.

Whether it be read or preached, be not only attentive to it, but inwardly digest it, by applying to your own conscience its *general admonitions, reproofs,* or *exhortations*; and by treasuring up in your memory its *precepts* and *examples,* its *promises* and *threatnings,* for the constant and right *ordering* of your *conversation.*

In singing Psalms,

Let your *understanding* and *spirit* direct and govern the *melody* of your *voice,* that so your *heart* may be no less filled with *grace,* than your *tongue* with *joy.*

In receiving the Sacrament of the Lord's Supper,

Remember always the exceeding great love of our Master and only Saviour in dying for us, and the innumerable benefits which by his precious blood-shedding he hath obtained to us. For you will then, at all times, draw near to receive it with faith, with a *penitent* and *obedient* heart, in *love* and *charity* with all mankind, and with a determined resolution to forsake those sins which brought him

him even to the death upon the croſs; which will likewiſe engage you to ſerve him in true holineſs and righteouſneſs all the days of your life.

But beſides theſe *general* directions for the *public worſhip* of GOD, there are others which *particularly* concern a devout and proper uſe of the book of *common prayer* appointed by the *church of England:* and which will require your immediate attention to the nature, and the order of every part in that *ſervice.*

The Sentences.

Now the firſt thing done by the miniſter, is to read ſome *ſentences* out of the holy ſcriptures. Hearken diligently to theſe, and conſider them as ſpoken at firſt by the *inſpiration* or *command* of GOD himſelf, and now repeated by his *miniſter*, to put you in mind of ſomething which HE would have you *believe* or *do*. For they are ſuch ſentences as not only bring our *ſins* to our remembrance, but alſo HIS *promiſes of pardon* and *forgiveneſs*, if we do repent; that ſo we may worſhip him with that *reverence* and *godly fear*, which becomes thoſe who are ſenſible of their own *ſinfulneſs* and *unworthineſs* to approach his divine majeſty; and likewiſe with that faith and humble confidence which become thoſe, who believe that upon their repentance he will pardon and accept them, according to thoſe promiſes.

The Exhortation.

Then follows a ſolemn *exhortation.* Now while this is reading (which is the miniſter's part alone, and not to be repeated after him by the congregation) *take particular notice of every word and expreſſion in it*, as contrived on purpoſe to prepare you for the *worſhip* of GOD, by poſſeſſing your mind with a due ſenſe of his *ſpecial preſence*, and of the great ends of your coming before him at this time; which will *compoſe* your thoughts for that part of the ſervice which follows next; I mean, an humble *confeſſion* of your ſins.

The Confeſſion.

But here, while you are *confeſſing* to GOD with *your mouth*, and repeating ſentence by ſentence after the miniſter, be ſure to do the ſame *in your heart*; calling to mind, as many as you can, of thoſe particular ſins which you have been guilty of; either by *doing what you ought not to do*, or *not doing what you ought*; ſo as to be heartily ſorry for them, and ſtedfaſtly to reſolve againſt them for the time to come; imploring his *mercy* in the *pardon* of them, and his *grace*, that from thenceforward you may entirely forſake them, and bring forth the fruits of an unfeigned repentance.

The Abſolution.

The *confeſſion* ended, and you continuing upon your knees, the miniſter ſtands up, and in the name of GOD

declares and pronounces *pardon* and *forgiveneſs* to all that *truly repent*, and *unfeignedly believe* his holy goſpel. — But while the *abſolution* is thus pronouncing, you are to hearken to it with perfect ſilence, not *reading* or *repeating* it along with the miniſter, as many ignorant or unthinking people do; for it is the miniſter's duty alone to make this declaration, by authority from GOD, and in his name, as his *ambaſſador*. However, every particular perſon preſent ought humbly and thankfully to apply it to himſelf, ſo far as to be fully perſuaded in his own mind, that if, after an unfeigned and unſhaken belief in *Chriſt*, he doth *really* and *heartily repent*, he will be *diſcharged* and *abſolved* from all the ſins he had before committed, as certainly as if GOD himſelf had declared it with his own mouth, ſince his *miniſter* has done it in *his name*, and by *his power*.

The Lord's Prayer.

What follows is the *Lord's Prayer*, in which the whole congregation joins: for looking upon ourſelves as thus abſolved from our ſins, through a *faith* that worketh true repentance, we, as reconciled unto GOD through his Son, may have ſuch *boldneſs* and *acceſs to the throne of divine grace, as by the Spirit of adoption to cry out, Abba, Father*, in the very form he taught us to pray; ſaying, *Our Father, which art in heaven*, &c.

Pre-

Preparation for praiſing GOD.

This done, we are to lift up our hearts to GOD in this petition of his *miniſter* for his *grace*; *O Lord, open thou our lips*; to which the anſwer is, what it ought to be, from the *people, and our mouth ſhall ſhew forth thy praiſe.* Thus the miniſter again, *O God, make ſpeed to ſave us*; the people, *O Lord, make haſte to help us.* Then immediately ſtanding up, we put ourſelves into a poſture of *giving praiſe* to the *one, living, and true* GOD, the *King of kings, the Lord of lords.* For which purpoſe the miniſter firſt ſays, *Glory be to the Father*, &c. the people, to ſhew their conſent, anſwer, *As it was in the beginning*, &c. The miniſter calling again upon the people, *Praiſe ye the Lord*; and the people anſwering, *The Lord's name be praiſed.*

The Pſalms and Hymns.

We go on accordingly to praiſe him, by ſaying or ſinging the ninety-fifth *Pſalm*; and then the Pſalms appointed for the day. After every one of which we teſtify that it is the ſame divine Being, *three perſons*, and ONE GOD, in whoſe honor theſe Pſalms were compoſed, and made uſe of in the *Jewiſh* church, who is ſtill praiſed and worſhipped in the chriſtian church, and accordingly we repeat that incomparable hymn, *Glory be to the Father*, &c.

Now while you, together with the miniſter, are repeating theſe *Pſalms*, and this, or the other *Hymns*, that

are uſed in different places of the ſervice to the honor and glory of GOD; obſerve the *miniſter's part*, as well as *your own*, and lift up your heart, together with your voice, in *acknowledging*, *magnifying*, and *praiſing* the infinite *wiſdom*, and *power*, and *goodneſs*, and *glory* of the moſt *High God* in all his works, the *wonders* that he has done, and ſtill does for the children of men, and for yourſelf among the reſt. And in doing this you *ſtand up*; not only to *ſignify*, but to *forward* the lifting up of your mind at the ſame time. For as on the one hand, if our ſouls be already lifted up, to contemplate and praiſe GOD, our bodies will *naturally* riſe in that erect poſture, which is natural to, and moſt becometh man; ſo on the other hand, the *raiſing up of our bodies* helps towards the *raiſing up of our ſouls*, by putting us in mind of that *high* and *heavenly* work we are about; wherein, according to our weak capacities, we join with the *ſaints* and *angels* above in praiſing GOD *now*, as we hope to do *hereafter*, in their *bleſſed company for evermore*.

The Scriptures read.

When GOD's *word* is in reading, in either of the chapters, whether of the Old or New Teſtament, receive it not as the *word of men*, but as it is in truth, the word of GOD, *which effectually worketh in them that believe*: and therefore hearken to it with the ſame *attention*, *reverence*, and *faith*, as you would have done, if you had ſtood by mount *Sinai*, when GOD *proclaimed the law*,

law, or by our *Saviour*'s ſide, when he publiſhed the *goſpel*. But remember alſo, that you *hear* in order to *practiſe*; that you *be a doer of the word, not a hearer only, deceiving your ownſelf*. Obſerve in thoſe parts of ſcripture that are read to you, what *ſins* almighty GOD there warns you againſt; what *duties* he there requires you to perform; what *doctrines* he there teaches you; and be ſure that when you go home, you *think* of them, and *live accordingly*.

Hymns after the Leſſons and Creed.

As ſoon as the *firſt leſſon* is read, and again after the *ſecond*, we renew our devout praiſes to GOD in certain *hymns* appointed for that purpoſe. And then with one heart and voice we all repeat the *creed*, to ſignify and declare our aſſent to, and firm belief of the whole ſcriptures, but eſpecially of the *goſpel of Chriſt*.

Many *ignorant* people ſeem to take the *creed* to be a *prayer*, and repeat it as ſuch; which is a very groſs miſtake. It is not a *prayer*, but only a *ſolemn acknowledgment* and profeſſion of our faith, or what we believe as chriſtians. And by repeating it here, we do, in the face of the congregation, profeſs ourſelves to continue in the number of Chriſt's diſciples: and that as we were at firſt baptized, ſo we ſtill *believe* in the name *of the Father, Son, and Holy Ghoſt*, ONE GOD, bleſſed for ever! And this alſo we do *ſtanding*, to ſignify our readineſs to defend this faith to the utmoſt of our power, againſt all oppoſition

whatſoever. Be ſure therefore, that you *really believe* every article as you pronounce it, that you be not found diſſemblers and hypocrites in the ſight of GOD: and when you ſtand up to repeat the *creed*, let it be your ſerious purpoſe to continue in that good profeſſion, and to ſtand by it, and *hold it faſt without wavering*, under all perſecutions, if you ſhould be called at any time to ſuffer for it.

The Prayers or Collects.

The next thing we do is to make known our wants, and preſent our petitions unto GOD. But ſeeing that neither *miniſter* nor *people* can poſſibly do it aright, without the *grace* and aſſiſtance of GOD himſelf; the miniſter firſt prays for his ſpecial preſence with the people, ſaying, *The* LORD *be with* YOU; and they put up the ſame petition for the miniſter, anſwering him, *And with* THY *ſpirit*. Upon which they all immediately *adore* him, and beg for mercy from each perſon of the bleſſed Trinity, ſaying, *Lord, have mercy upon us! Chriſt, have mercy upon us! Lord, have mercy upon us!* And having again addreſſed ourſelves to GOD in that moſt perfect form which Chriſt himſelf hath taught us, the *Lord's Prayer*, the miniſter and people by turns, lift up their hearts to GOD in ſome ſhort and devout *ejaculations*; ſtriving, as it were, to outvie each other, in prevailing with the Almighty to pour down his bleſſings upon us. Then in an humble and ſolemn manner we join together in

Joint

Joint Prayers or Collects,

Petitioning the divine majeſty for his grace and favour, his defence and protection, his mercy and bleſſings, for *the king*, for the *royal family*, for the church, for ourſelves, and for all mankind. This we ordinarily do in the *collects* appointed for that purpoſe; but upon *Wedneſday*, *Friday*, and the *Lord's-day* morning, we do it in the *litany*; and in ſuch a *litany* as comprehends all and every thing that we *need to deſire of almighty* GOD, either for *ourſelves* or *others*.

Reverence and Devotion.

While theſe prayers are reading, we ought devoutly to continue upon our knees; not ſitting, or in any other ſlothful poſture, as too many profanely and irreverently do. See therefore, that as you come to church to *pray to* GOD, you do it in that *awful*, *lowly*, and *ſolemn* manner which becomes creatures, when they ſpeak to *their great and almighty Creator*. And although you ought not to repeat the prayers aloud, to the diſturbance of other people, yet you muſt repeat them in a whiſper, and in your heart; your mind accompanying the miniſter from one prayer to another, and from one part of each prayer to the other, all along, with attention to the ſenſe of every word, and *affections* ſuitable to the matter; humbly *adoring* and *admiring* GOD, accord-

ing to the *names*, *properties*, and *works* which are attributed to him at the *beginning* of each prayer; *earneſtly* deſiring the good things which are aſked of him, in the *body* of it, for yourſelves or others; and ſtedfaſtly believing in the *merits* and *interceſſion of Jeſus Chriſt* for your obtaining of them when he is named, as he always is at the end of every prayer, except that of St. *Chryſoſtom*, which is directed immediately to *Chriſt* himſelf. At the concluſion of every collect, you are alſo to teſtify your ſincere joining in it, and your earneſt deſire of a ſhare in the bleſſings prayed for, by a ſolemn *Amen*, which ſignifies *So be it*, or *Thus I heartily pray God it may be.*

Anſwers in the Litany.

In the *litany*, the aſſent is ſignified by the *anſwers* which the people are directed to make in their proper places, as, *Good Lord, deliver us!* that is, deliver us from thoſe ſins, or other evils, which the *miniſter* has juſt before mentioned. *We beſeech thee to hear us, good Lord!* that is, to *grant* thoſe bleſſings which the *miniſter* has juſt now recommended to our deſires. By theſe we expreſly, and more at large make the ſeveral petitions, recited before by the miniſter, our *own petitions* and *requeſts* to GOD.

The general Thankſgiving.

And having thus in the collects, or litany, prayed for all neceſſary bleſſings for ourſelves and others, it is but fit

we ſhould praiſe him alſo for thoſe mercies we have already received; and give thanks, not only in behalf of ourſelves, but according to the apoſtle's direction, for *all mankind*; which we do, towards the end of the ſervice, in the *general thankſgiving*. Here, if you have any ſpecial or particular mercy to bleſs GOD for, upon your own account, gratefully remember it, and ſecretly in your heart return your praiſes for it, when you come to that paſſage, *Thy goodneſs and loving-kindneſs to us and to all men.* But ſtir up yourſelf with fervency, when you praiſe him for his *ineſtimable love in the redemption of the world by our Lord Jeſus Chriſt, for the means of grace, and for the hope of glory.* For as theſe are the *greateſt bleſſings* he could beſtow upon us, the thankful acknowledgment of them is one of the *chief ends* of our coming together thus in chriſtian aſſemblies. Therefore not only heartily pray, but ſincerely reſolve and endeavour to ſhew your ſenſe of theſe, as of all other mercies, by an holy and obedient life.

Concluding Prayer.

After this general thankſgiving, we have the prayer of St. *Chryſoſtom*; and then the miniſter alone concludes with *The grace of our Lord Jeſus Chriſt*, &c. In which prayer is comprehended all we have deſired, or can deſire, to make us completely happy both now and for ever. And with this our *common daily ſervice* ends.

THE

THE COMMUNION SERVICE.

But upon *Sundays* and *holidays* we proceed to the *communion ſervice*, to that part of it at leaſt which our church enjoins to be uſed on ſuch days, though there be no *actual communion*. Now in the prayers here, the ſame temper and devotion is to govern you, as in thoſe before put up; the ſame reverence and attention when the *epiſtles* and *goſpels* are read, as when the other ſcriptures (the *firſt* and *ſecond* leſſons) are in reading; the ſame faith, and holy zeal and courage, when the creeds are repeated.

The Commandments.

But what is moſt particular in the communion ſervice is, that the *ten commandments* are ſolemnly read by the miniſter; and to expreſs the greater authority, as pronouncing them in the name of GOD, he does it *ſtanding*. The congregation in the mean time is to continue *kneeling*; not that the commandments are a *prayer*, as ſome weak people fancy them to be; nor need they be repeated after the *miniſter*, as many do, but becauſe it is with a *peculiar reverence* that we ought to *hear* this *awful declaration* and *ſummary of* GOD's *will*, and of *our duty*, in the very words of GOD himſelf: and becauſe that at the end of each commandment, our church has piouſly directed us to *beg the mercy of* GOD, in pardoning what we have been guilty of againſt the rule of that commandment, and his *grace* to keep it better for the future, in

theſe

theſe words, *Lord, have mercy upon us, and incline our hearts to keep this law*; which being a *prayer*, ought to be humbly offered upon our knees. Be very *ſerious* therefore when the *commandments are read*; and think, as the miniſter goes along, in every one of them, whether you have not offended GOD by thought, word, or deed, in ſomething contrary to that commandment, (for *in many things we all offend*, as the apoſtle tells us.) And accordingly, when you join with the reſt of the congregation, in that ſhort prayer which follows each *commandment*, beg *pardon* of GOD with a *deep* and *true repentance*; and, whether your *conſcience* accuſe you or not, be ſerious and in earneſt when you beg of GOD to *incline your heart to keep* that article of his law, and to *write* the whole upon it more effectually.

The Bleſſing at the end of the Communion Service.

This part of the ſervice concludes with a *bleſſing*, (to be pronounced by the miniſter alone, and not to be repeated after him) which is in theſe words; *The peace of* GOD, *which paſſes all underſtanding, keep your hearts and minds in the knowledge and love of* GOD, *and of his Son Jeſus Chriſt our* LORD; *and the bleſſing of* GOD *Almighty, the Father, the Son, and the Holy Ghoſt, be amongſt you and remain with you always.* Amen.

After the bleſſing, it may be fit to continue ſtill for ſome time upon your knees, humbly beſeeching almighty GOD to *pardon* what he has ſeen amiſs in you, ſince you

came into his preſence; and *graciouſly* to hear the *prayers*, and to accept of the *praiſes*, which you have now offered up to him, through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt, our only Mediator and Advocate.

After the Service is ended.

Bleſſed be thy Name, O Lord, for this opportunity of attending thee in thy houſe and ſervice.

Pardon my wanderings and imperfections, and accept me and my Services, through my only Mediator *Jeſus Chriſt*. Amen."

AN ALPHABETICAL TABLE

Of the weekly collects in the book of Common-prayer, under their proper heads; alſo of the ſeveral ſubjects of the Pſalms.

PRAYERS ON THE FOLLOWING SUBJECTS.

Affliction. *Collects* for the 3d *Sunday* after *Epiphany*, 8th after *Trinity*, 15th in *Lent*.

Angels. *Collect* for St. *Michael*.

Chaſtity. *Collect* for the 1ſt *Sunday* in *Lent*.

Chriſt. The imitations of him. *Collects* for the next *Sunday* before *Eaſter*, and 2d after *Eaſter*.

. . . Benefit of his death. *Collect* for the *Annunciation*.

Church. *Collects* for the 5th *Sunday* after *Epiphany*, 3d after *Eaſter*, St. *John Evangeliſt*, and the two firſt *Collects* for *Good Friday*.

. . . Unity of it. *Collect* for St. *Simon* and St. *Jude*.

. . . Peace of it. *Collects* for the 5th, 16th, and 22d *Sundays* after *Trinity*.

Comfort. *Collect* for the *Sunday* after the *Aſcenſion*.

Contrition. *Collect* for *Aſh-Wedneſday*.

Covetouſneſs. *Collect* for St. *Matthew*'s day.

Courage. *Collect* for St. *John Baptiſt*.

Enemies.

Enemies. For deliverance from them. *Collect* for the 3d *Sunday* in *Lent.*

Example. That we may follow the example of Chriſt. *Collects* for the *Sunday* next before *Eaſter*, and the 2d after *Eaſter Sunday.*

Faith. *Collects* for *Trinity Sunday*, St. *Thomas*, St. *Mark*, and 14th *Sunday* after *Trinity.*

Grace. Grace and aſſiſtance in our chriſtian courſe. *Collects* the 4th in *Advent*, 2d in *Lent*, *Eaſter-day*, 3d in *Eaſter*, 1ſt, 7th, and 13th after *Trinity.*

Heaven. For heavenly deſires. *Collect* for *Aſcenſion-day.*

. . . For the enjoyment of GOD in heaven. *Collects* for *Epiphany*, 6th *Sunday* after *Epiphany*, and the *Sunday* after *Aſcenſion.*

Humility. *Collect* for the *Sunday* before *Eaſter.*

Illumination, Or a right judgment in all things. *Collects* for *Whitſunday*, 1ſt *Sunday* after *Epiphany*, and 9th after *Trinity.*

Judgment. For deliverance from judgments. *Collects* for *Septuageſima*, *Sexageſima*, and the 4th *Sunday* in *Lent.*

Love. Love of God and his laws. *Collects* for the 4th *Sunday* after *Eaſter*, 6th, 7th, and 14th after *Trinity.*

. . . Love and charity. *Collect* for *Quinquageſima Sunday.*

Miniſters. For fitneſs of miniſters. *Collect* for St. *Matthias.*

Miniſters. That they may be diligent. *Collect* for St. *Peter*'s day.

. . . . That their labors may be ſucceſsful. *Collect* for the 3d *Sunday* in *Advent*.

Mortification. *Collects* for the *Circumciſion* and *Eaſter-eve*.

Obedience. That we may obey and follow the doctrine of the apoſtles. *Collects* for the *Converſion* of St. *Paul*, and St. *John Baptiſt*.

Prayer. For the acceptance of our prayers. *Collect* for the 10th *Sunday* after *Trinity*.

Providence. Prayers for protection by God's providence. *Collects* for the 2d, 3d, 4th and 20th *Sundays* after *Trinity*.

Purity. A prayer for purity of heart. *Collect* for the *Purification*.

Regeneration. A prayer for it. *Collect* for *Chriſtmas-day*.

Religion. A prayer that we may be truly religious. *Collect* for the 7th *Sunday* after *Trinity*.

Saints. Prayers for the imitation of them. *Collect* for *Innocents-day*, St. *Stephen*, St. *Philip*, St. *James*, St. *John Baptiſt*, and *All Saints*.

Scripture. A prayer before reading the ſcripture. *Collect* for the 2d *Sunday* in *Advent*.

Sin. Prayers for converſion from ſin. *Collects* for the 1ſt *Sunday* in *Advent*, the 1ſt after *Eaſter*, St. *Andrew*, St. *James*, and St. *Matthew*.

For *pardon of Sin.* *Collects* for the 12th, 21ſt and 24th *Sundays* after *Trinity*.

Sincerity.

Sincerity. A prayer for it. *Collect* for the 3d *Sunday* after *Easter*.

Holy Spirit. Prayers for the direction of the Holy Spirit. *Collects* for the 19th *Sunday* after *Trinity*, and 5th after *Easter*.

Temptations. Prayers for deliverance from, and support under temptation. *Collects* for the 4th *Sunday* after *Epiphany*, and 2d in *Lent*.

Thoughts. A prayer againſt evil thoughts. *Collect* for the 5th *Sunday* after *Easter*.

Unbelievers. A prayer for *Jews*, *Turks*, *Infidels* and *Heretics*. The 3d *Collect* for *Good Friday*.

Good Works. Prayers for fruitfulneſs in good works. *Collects* for the 5th *Sunday* after *Easter*, and the 1ſt, 9th, 11th, 13th, 17th and 25th *Sundays* after *Trinity*.

A SHORT ACCOUNT

Of the occaſion and deſign of the Pſalms of David, *which may ſerve in the private uſe of that divine book, as an help to find out ſuch Pſalms, as may ſuit the general or particular circumſtances of chriſtians.*

Moſt of the Pſalms are prayers compoſed when David, *or ſome other prophetic author was expoſed to great danger or affliction; and therefore flies to God as his only help in time of need, implores his mercy, the pardon of ſins, or deliverance from dangers and afflictions. Many are Pſalms of thankſgiving for mercies received: ſome are deſigned to diſplay the attributes and perfections of God, while others convey to us the moſt uſeful moral inſtructions. Laſtly, ſome of the Pſalms are prophetical, and ſome few hiſtorical.*

PRAYERS.

I. Prayers for pardon of ſin.

Pſalms 6, 25, 38, 51, 130.

II. Prayers compoſed when the Pſalmiſt was deprived of an opportunity of the public exerciſe of religion.

Pſalms 42, 43, 63, 84.

III. Prayers wherein the Pſalmiſt ſeems extremely dejected, though not totally deprived of conſolation, under his afflictions.

Pſalms 13, 22, 69, 77, 88, 143.

IV. Prayers wherein the Pſalmiſt aſketh help of God, in conſideration of his own integrity, and the uprightneſs of his cauſe.

Pſalms 7, 17, 26, 35.

V. Prayers expreſſing the firmeſt truſt and confidence in God under afflictions.

Pſalms 3, 16, 27, 31, 54, 56, 57, 61, 62, 71, 86.

VI. Prayers compoſed when the people of God were under affliction or perſecution.

Pſalms 44, 60, 74, 79, 80, 83, 89, 94, 102, 123, 137.

VII. Prayers in time of trouble and affliction.

Pſalms 4, 5, 11, 28, 41, 55, 59, 64, 70, 109, 120, 140, 141, 142.

VIII. Prayers of interceſſion.

Pſalms 20, 67, 122, 132, 144.

PSALMS OF THANKSGIVING.

I. Thankſgivings for mercies vouchſafed to particular perſons.

Pſalms 9, 18, 21, 30, 34, 40, 75, 103, 108, 116, 118, 138, 144.

II. Thankſgivings for mercies vouchſafed to the *Iſraelites* in general.

Pſalms 46, 48, 65, 66, 68, 76, 81, 85, 98, 105, 124, 126, 129, 135, 136, 149.

PSALMS OF PRAISE AND ADORATION, DISPLAYING THE ATTRIBUTES OF GOD.

I. General acknowledgments of God's goodneſs and mercy, and particularly his care and protection of good men.

Pſalms 23, 34, 36, 91, 100, 103, 107, 117, 121, 145, 146.

II. Pſalms diſplaying the power, majeſty, glory, and other attributes of the divine Being.

Pſalms 8, 19, 24, 29, 33, 47, 50, 65, 66, 76, 77, 93, 95, 96, 97, 99, 104, 111, 113, 114, 115, 134, 139, 147, 148, 150.

INSTRUCTIVE PSALMS.

I. The different characters of *good* and *bad* men. The *happineſs* of the *one*, and the miſeries of the *other*, are repreſented in

Pſalms 1, 5, 7, 9, 10, 11, 12, 14, 15, 17, 24, 25, 32, 34, 36, 37, 50, 52, 53, 58, 73, 75, 84, 91, 92, 94, 112, 119, 121, 125, 127, 128, 133.

II. The excellence of God's law.

Pſalms 19, 119.

III. The vanity of human life.

Pſalms 39, 49, 90.

IV. Advice to magiſtrates.

Pſalms 82, 101.

V. The virtue of humility.

Pſalm 131.

PROPHETICAL PSALMS.

Pſalms 2, 16, 22, 40, 45, 68, 72, 87, 110, 118.

HISTORICAL PSALMS.

Pſalms 78, 105, 106.

DE-



DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS.

1.

Under a conſciouſneſs of great offences.

O *Lord, and tender Father of mankind*, have compaſſion on me, according to the bowels of thy mercy! My *conſcience* hath cried aloud againſt me; enter not into *judgment* with thy ſervant, but let thy *goodneſs* cover my *confuſion*. Raiſe me up, *O Lord*, that I may no longer lie *dead* in ſin; but grant that I may *live*, and *living*, rejoice in thy name! Let me not wander into *ſtrange* paths, but ſeeing my *folly* and my *weakneſs*, I may gain *wiſdom* and *ſtrength*; and, by thy mighty grace aſſiſting, become thy *true* and *faithful* ſervant!

2.

The ſame.

O Lord, my Father, and my God! I have *ſinned* before thee, and am not worthy to be called thy *child*. I waſted the *heavenly* ſubſtance which thou gaveſt me; O relieve me with the *riches of thy* mercy. Open mine eyes, that I may behold the *paths of righteouſneſs!* Set my heart at *liberty* from the *bondage of ſin*, that I may ſerve thee with a *willing mind*: and let the blood of my *Redeemer* purge away my offences!

3.

The ſame.

O Lord Almighty, I beſeech thee let not thine anger burn againſt me. I have *ſinned!*—I have *ſinned* againſt thee, *O Lord*; but thou in thy mercy haſt called me to *repentance!* Fill my heart with *gratitude* for this my *deliverance! Immortal* thanks be unto thee, O gracious *Father*, and *mighty Lord* of heaven and earth! Let the ſenſe of theſe thy *mercies* keep me ever in *thy fear*, and under thy protection! Let my *life* be devoted to thee; that, if it is thy pleaſure, I may rejoice to *die* for thy honor, that through the merits of thy dear Son I may inherit *life eternal!*

4.

The ſame.

Look down from thy triumphant glory, *O Lord of heaven*, and behold thy ſervant proſtrate before thee! Look *comfortably* on me, and *cheer* my *mournful ſpirit.* Give me ſuch *ſtrength* and *humble confidence* in thee, that thy *mercies* may *ſhine* forth in me. My *neglect* of thy laws has rendered me an out-caſt, even among the *children of the world!* O let my *obedience* obtain thy forgiveneſs for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake!

5.

The ſame.

O Lord, and mighty God of truth, I have ſinned, and mine iniquities teſtify againſt me: *but thou art the hope of Iſrael*,

Iſrael, and a Saviour in time of trouble! O ſhew me thy mercy, for thy glories are *wonderful!* Though my ſins are more numerous than the hairs on my head, thou canſt waſh me clean. Be not a *ſtranger* to my ſoul, *O Lord*, nor ſhut up thy *loving kindneſs* from me. Turn thee again, and be gracious unto me! O *ſatisfy* me with thy mercy, that I may rejoice in thy name! Conſider the years in which I have ſuffered *adverſity*: and whilſt my fleſh trembleth for fear of thee, and my ſpirit is afraid of thy judgments, O ſtabliſh me according to thy gracious promiſes in the goſpel, that I may never be diſappointed of my hope in *Jeſus Chriſt my Redeemer!*

6.

The ſame.

O Lord Almighty, whoſe awful preſence *patriarchs*, *prophets*, and *ſaints* were not able to approach: can I be *worthy* to lift up mine eyes to *heaven*, or preſent myſelf before the *majeſty of thy throne!* Thou art *pure* and *holy*, and wilt not juſtify a ſinner in tranſgreſſions! Suffer me not to be *ſwallowed up of death*, nor to become a *child of perdition!* Thou art *my Father*, O GOD, and I am *thy child*: Thou art my *Creator*, and I am the *work of thy hands*. Remember *my weakneſs*, O LORD, as well as my *ſins*; and let thy *mercy* ſuccor and preſerve me. Heal my *broken conſcience*, and let my *ſins* and *ignorances* be done away. Endue me with thy Spirit, that I may *amend* my life, according to thy holy word; and receive thy *pardon* and *peace* in *Jeſus Chriſt my Redeemer.*

7.

Againſt hardneſs of heart.

O ALMIGHTY LORD, who in compaſſion to thy peculiar people diſſt cauſe water to flow from *ſtony rocks*, let teats of *contrition* flow from my *offending* eyes, that with *hearty repentance* I may *bewail* my *ſins*, and by *true faith*, obtain of thee *perfect remiſſion and forgiveneſs*. I acknowledge the *wickedneſs* by which I have juſtly provoked thy *wrath* and *indignation*. O make the remembrance of it *grievous* unto me! Soften my *obdurate* heart, *O Lord*, that truly ſenſible of my *offences*, I may as truly *ſerve* and *pleaſe* thee in *newneſs* of life, through my only Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt!*

8.

For reſolution, ſincerity and dependance on God.

O GRACIOUS FATHER of mankind, behold thy ſinful creature! *Without thee* I can do nothing but *ſin: without thee* I cannot ſue for pardon. How often have I been *ſorry*, and *repented* of my *miſdeeds*; and how often have I again *tranſgreſſed againſt thee? How ſhall I look up to heaven! O Lord of mercy, pour forth the abundance of thy mercies on my ſoul.* Give me *ſincerity* of heart, *upright intentions*, and a *ſteady purpoſe of mind*; that *ſeeing my ſins* I may *confeſs* them; and *confeſſing*, be *afraid* and *aſhamed* to offend thee any more! O give me a *firm* and *vigorous reſolution*, that with ſtedfaſt faith I may behold the *things which belong to my peace, before they are hid from*

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mine eyes for ever! Grant this, O Lord of heaven, thro' the *infinite* compaſſion of thy dear Son!

9.

For chaſtity, in the perſon of a great offender.

O *bleſſed Jeſus*, look down from the glories of thy throne, and behold me who am the price of thy blood! Thou cameſt down from heaven to redeem that which was *loſt*, ſuffer not that to be *loſt again* which thou haſt once redeemed. — I have been the *temple* of thy Spirit, *O God of Iſrael!* let not my *pollutions deſtroy* me, but *ſanctify* me again to thy uſe. I am wearied with the *burden of my ſins*, and my ſoul *thirſteth after* thee; O refreſh me with the *waters of life*, that I may *drink and live for ever!*

10.

For the ſame.

O thou everlaſting God, who haſt mercifully delivered me from the dominion of the *prince of darkneſs*, I now ſtand before thy throne a *monument* of thy compaſſion! *Whom* have I in *heaven* but thee, and what is there *on earth* to be compared to thy *favor* and *protection!* Let not the *fooliſh vanity of attire*, nor all the *gaudy trappings of ſplendid infamy* entice me into ſin. Let no fond conceit of *perſonal* charms *delude* me, nor the ſoft blandiſhments of life, eſtrange my ſoul from thee. *Enlighten* my underſtanding; *improve* my reaſon; and *ſtrengthen* my faith; that *nothing* may appear deſirable in compariſon of a *pure heart*,

heart, and a *peaceful conſcience*. *Thou*, *O Lord*, art my *peace*: *thou* art my *only reſt!* in thee alone is *pleaſure* and *true ſatisfaction*, and all *without* thee is *deluſion*, *miſery*, and *torment!*

11.

For the ſame.

Give me, *O Lord*, I beſeech thee, ſuch a *bleſſed habit of mind*, that whether ſecluded from a *world of temptation*, or *guarded* from every approach of ſin, I may *obey* thy laws, *adore* thy mercies, and *magnify* thy glorious name! Grant me, *O gracious Lord*, ſo to ſubdue my ſpirit, to thy *eaſy yoke*, that I may offer up my *prayers* and *praiſes* to thee, with a *pure*, an *humble*, and a *contrite* heart; and finally be received into *thy glory*, through the mediation of my only *Saviour* and *Redeemer*.

12.

For the ſame.

O Lord of heaven, whoſe eyes are too *pure* to behold *iniquity*, have mercy on thy *ſinful creature*, who offereth up her *prayers* unto thee! *Chaſtiſe* my *imagination*, and *curb* my *wandering* thoughts: let not *beauty* deceive me, nor *luſt* pervert my heart; nor any temptation turn *mine eyes* from *heaven*. Purify my *corrupt affections*, and renew a *right ſpirit* within me. *Waſh* me thoroughly from my ſins, and remove the ſtains of my *foul* offences, and let my body become a *fit habitation* of my immortal ſoul!

Guard

Guard every *avenue* to my heart, and give me ſtrength to drive all wicked thoughts far from me; that *religion* may become my *delight*, and *obedience* to thy *laws*, my *comfort!* Send me thy *helping grace*, *O God*, for the ſake of the ſpotleſs ſoul of thy beloved Son, that no *bad example* may *ſhake* my purpoſe; no *wiles* of Satan *enſnare*; no *fooliſh fancy* delude me into *ſin!* but ſo *guide* my ſteps, and arm me with reſolution, that I may *die*, rather than *offend* thee, *O thou tender father of mankind!*

13.

For the ſame.

Thou who wouldſt not, *O merciful Lord*, that any of thy creatures ſhould periſh, forgive my rank offences! With horror and confuſion I look back on the *abominations* of my paſt life!—How have I wandered from thy paths, and involved *others* in ſin! My *ſhameleſſneſs* hath rendered me as a *dog*; and I have been accounted as *ſpittle*. Inſtead of being a tower againſt death to a *virtuous man*, I have been the contempt of the *vicious!* Even they who have been partakers in mine *iniquities*, have ſpurned at me! —How have I *departed* from that *grace* and *dignity* with which thou haſt diſtinguiſhed thoſe who obey thy commandments!—*Return*, *O mighty Lord of hoſts*, *return* and drive mine *enemies* far from me. Be *merciful* to my ſins! —Wipe out my miſdeeds, and reſtore my *innocency!*

14.

For the ſame.

O Lord, and merciful Father, who ſtoppeth not thine ears at the cries of the *wretched*, hear the ſupplications which I make before thee! Give me an humble and a contrite ſpirit, that I may entertain *no evil thought*, nor dare to utter an *indecent expreſſion*. I ſhudder at the proſpect of my *paſt* life, O let me fly from every *temptation* which may expoſe me for the *future*. Remove far from me all *ſubtleneſs of heart* and *contempt of* thy *word* and *commandments*. The practices of deceit have returned into mine own boſom, and as it were by a dart ſtriken through my liver, I became a victim to ſin and Satan! Reſcue me, O Lord, from the hands of mine enemies, that my ways may no longer lead me into the *chambers of death*, nor my heart decline into the paths of perdition!

15.

For the ſame.

O Eternal God, in whoſe ſight nothing *impure* can ſtand, let my ſocial affections burn with a *pure* and *lambent* flame, but ſuffer not the blaze of luſt to *conſound* me. Let not my *ſincerity* beguile, nor my *tenderneſs* pollute my heart. Give me a *ſteady mind, O Lord!* and whatever my diſtreſs, or poverty ſhall be, remove from me every temptation which may involve my ſoul in ſin: and give me reſolution to ſcorn *that relief* which is the

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wages of iniquity, and the price of perdition! What, *O Lord*, can I receive in exchange for my ſoul! Let not the *cuſtoms* of the world weaken my abhorrence of ſin. Thou, *O Lord*, art the *God of truth!* O let me remember the judgments which thou haſt denounced againſt ſuch offences, that I may implore thy forgiveneſs, and revere thy laws, through the intercеſſion of my bleſſed Redeemer!

16.

For the ſame.

O moſt *holy and merciful Lord*, I have ſinned againſt thee, in that I have not reſiſted my *irregular deſires*. My *affections* have *wandered*, and my *heart* hath *ſtrayed* from thee: O give me thy *grace to return*, that my *reſolutions* may be *fulfilled*, and mine *iniquities* be no more remembered! *Purify* my ſpirit, and *baniſh* from it all *fooliſh* and *wicked ſuggeſtions*, that the evils which I have committed may be done away, and my ſoul *cleanſed*, through the blood of my *bleſſed Saviour*. Grant me that help which thou art more ready to *give* than I to *aſk*, and have mercy on my ſins for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake!

17.

For meekneſs and purity of heart.

O *Father Almighty, and God of my life*, I beſeech thee *humble my ſoul in thy preſence!* Give me not a *proud look*,

and turn away from me a *haughty mind!* Let no *vain hopes deceive*, nor *evil deſires pervert my heart*. Leave me not to the *councils of ſinners*, and let me not fall into *their ſnares*. Set a *ſcourge over my thoughts, O Lord*, that the *diſcipline of wiſdom* may rule my heart, and *meekneſs of ſpirit give reſt unto my ſoul*. Pardon mine *ignorances* and *infirmities*. Let a habit of *temperance* reſtrain my *appetites*, that neither the *greedineſs of the belly*, nor the *luſt of the fleſh*, may prevail againſt me; and give me not over unto an *impudent mind*; but teach me to ſerve thee for ever in *true faithfulneſs*, through *Jeſus Chriſt* my Redeemer!

18.

On faith.

O Lord almighty, who of thine *infinite* love haſt ſent *thine only Son* to make thy *will* known unto men; whilſt thy *goſpel* ſhineth on the earth, I beſeech thee let *me* not *fooliſhly* ſtray, nor *blindly* wander in *darkneſs!* Suffer me not to walk in the paths of the *world*, whilſt the *footſteps* of *him* who *overcame the world*, are before mine eyes;—even the *example* of my *bleſſed Redeemer!* Suffer not the *cuſtoms* or *opinions* of men to over-rule *my reaſon*; but make it my *daily taſk*, to *read* and *conſider* thy holy ſcriptures, which have brought ſuch joyful tidings to mankind. *Chaſten* me, *O Lord*, that I may *collect* my *diſſipated* thoughts, *ſubdue* my *evil* habits, and with a *ſteady* mind look forward to *eternity*.

19.

19.

On the ſame.

O Lord God almighty, in whoſe *favor* is *life*, and *everlaſting felicity!* Thou haſt graciouſly delivered me from the paths of *ignorance*, and from the *ways of perdition:* enlighten my *underſtanding*, that I may ſearch with *diligence*, hear and digeſt with *faith*, and *meditate* with *joy:* and with *patience* and *comfort* hold faſt thy *ſacred word*, even *with my lateſt breath.* — And as I *learn* thy *will*, O God, let my *anxious longing wiſhes*, to ſerve thee with a *pure* and *willing mind*, render my *heart* an *offering* acceptable in thy ſight! This I beg, *O father of mercies*, for the ſake of that *great prieſt* and *prophet* who brought *life* and *immortality* to light!

20.

On occaſion of attendance on the Sacrament.

Open my heart, *O Lord of heaven*, that I may receive thy word with the *trueſt faith*, and moſt *devout affection!* Pardon and forgive the diſtractions of my thoughts, and let my ſincerity atone for the imperfect performance of my *religious duties.* Teach me to fly with joy into thy *preſence*, and to ſupplicate thy *mercies* with ardent love! And when I commemorate the ſufferings of my CRUCI-

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FIED LORD, as *bread* and *wine* nouriſh my *body*, let the *conſecrated elements* invigorate my *ſoul*, that receiving thy creatures according to the inſtitution of my *bleſſed Savior*, I may call to remembrance his *meritorious death and paſſion*, and become a partaker of the reward which he hath promiſed to his *faithful ſervants!*

21.

For the ſame.

O LORD GOD ETERNAL, who haſt ordained, that *honor, thanks*, and *adoration* ſhall be paid to thee; imprint on my mind a juſt ſenſe of the neceſſity of receiving thy *holy communion*: let no *fooliſh opinion* that it may be diſpenſed with, divert me from ſo *eſſential a duty*. As the ſupport of my *animal life* depends on food, let the ſupply of *thy grace* be alſo *life* and *ſtrength* to my *ſpirit*. Let *fervent prayer and awful meditation* give me ſo ſtedfaſt a *confidence* in thee, O God, that I may always rejoice even when the *terrors of death* ſhall ſurround me! Let the commemoration of this *propitiatory ſacrifice* be a pledge of that affinity, by which I hope to be received under the ſhadow of thy almighty protection in the regions of immortal bliſs!

22.

22.

On the ſame, (on occaſion of receiving the Sacrament.)

O Lord, conſider my complaint, and be not angry with thy ſervant that humbly begs to *approach thy throne*. Give me thy *grace*, for I am *thine*; and deliver me not into the hands of my *ghoſtly enemies*. Receive me as a *returning prodigal*, and give me the *bread of life*, to relieve my *famiſhed ſoul*, *that I may live for ever!* How *abominable* are the ſins which I have committed! How *unutterable* thy *goodneſs in bringing me to thine altar!* Hear me, *O Lord*, that I may magnify the *wonders of thy mercies and long-ſuffering*. Shew forth thy *kindneſs*, and accept the *offering* of my heart!

23.

For Truſt in God.

O Lord my God, in thee have I put *my truſt*. Give me favor with them that know the *ſincerity of my heart*. Thou that art the *righteous judge* of men, let me never provoke thine anger by any diſtruſt of thy *goodneſs*. Let thy *righteous ſentence* come forth from thy *preſence*, and thine eyes behold *my condition*. I have *called* upon thee, *O God!* incline thine ear unto me, and hearken unto *my words*: deliver my ſoul from the *ungodly*, and from thoſe who have their portion *in this life*. Show me thy paths that I may walk *innocently*. *Examine me*, O Lord, and

prove me, try out my reins and my heart; for thy *loving kindneſs is* ever before mine eyes, and I will delight in *thy truth!*

24.

For the ſame.

O LORD ALMIGHTY, I beſeech thee give me thy grace, that I may waſh my hands in innocency, and tell of all thy *wonderous* works. Let the habitation of thy houſe, and the *place* where thine honor dwelleth, be my chief delight. Be merciful unto me, that I may rejoice in thy *ſalvation!* Let not the world reward me *evil* for *good*, nor the *unrighteous* triumph over me, but *comfort* thou my ſoul and *preſerve* me!

25.

For the ſame.

O LORD ETERNAL, thou art my *defender*, my *worſhip*, and the *lifter up of my head.* When I call upon thee, O Lord, hear me out of thy holy hill; and when I lay me down to ſleep, let thy mercy ſuſtain me. Unto thee alone belongeth *ſalvation*; and thy bleſſing is upon thoſe who praiſe thy name. Make my delight to be in the company of *righteous perſons*, and with ſuch as *excel in virtue*: and let me ſet THEE always before mine eyes, that I may *never fall.* My *heart* is glad, my *glory rejoiceth*, and my *fleſh* ſhall reſt *in hope*; for thou haſt ſhewn me

the

the *path of life*. In thy preſence, *O Lord*, is the *fulneſs of joy*, and at thy right hand there is *pleaſure for evermore!*

26.

For the ſame.

ALMIGHTY AND MOST MERCIFUL GOD, my *light* and my *ſalvation*, thou art the ſtrength of my life, O lead me to the habitation of thy righteouſneſs, that finally I may behold thy beauty. Hearken unto my voice when I cry unto thee: have mercy upon me, and hide not thy face from thy ſervant. Thou haſt been ever my ſuccour, forſake me not, *O God of my ſalvation!* If the whole world ſhould forſake me, let me not *faint*, but *hope* to ſee thy *goodneſs* in the *land of the living!* What is the higheſt earthly ſplendor to be accounted of, if I can reach *thy glory* in thy heaven of heavens!

27.

For the ſame.

IN THEE, O LORD do I put *my truſt*; let me never be put to *confuſion*. Bow down thine ear to me, and be my *ſtrong rock*, and my *houſe of defence*. *Guide*, me and *lead* me, O Lord of mercy! Into *thy hands* I commend my ſpirit, for thou haſt *redeemed* me, O LORD, THOU GOD OF TRUTH! I will rejoice in thy mercy, for thou haſt conſidered my trouble, and known my ſoul in adverſity, when my life was waxed old with heavineſs, and my

years with mourning. O ſhew me the light of thy countenance, and how plentiful thy *goodneſs* is, which thou haſt laid up for them that fear thee, and *prepared* for them that *put their truſt in* THEE, and not in the *ſons of men*. *O ſtabliſh my heart that I may ever truſt in thy mercy!*

28.

On Thankſgiving.

Hear me, *O Lord*, in the day of trouble: *O God of Jacob* defend me! *Remember* all my *offerings*, and accept the ſacrifice of my heart. Grant me my *ſoul's deſire:* and fill up the meaſure of my *hopes* in thee. I will *rejoice* in thy *ſalvation*, and *triumph* in thy name! Save, Lord, and hear me, *O king of heaven*, when I call upon thee! Be *merciful* unto me, and ſhew me the *light of thy countenance*, that thy *way* may be known upon earth, thy *ſaving health* among all nations. Let the whole earth rejoice, for thou wilt judge it in *righteouſneſs!* Let her bring forth her *increaſe*, for thou, O Lord, art bleſſed for ever; and let all the ends of the world fear thy name!

29.

For the ſame.

I will magnify thee, O GOD, MY KING, *and* I will *praiſe thy name for ever and ever!* Every day will I give thanks unto thee, and praiſe thy name *for ever and ever! Great* art thou, O LORD, and *marvellous*, worthy to be praiſed;

there

there is no end of thy greatneſs! One generation ſhall praiſe thy works unto *another*, and declare thy power! And let me talk of thy *worſhip*, thy *glory*, thy *praiſe*, and *wonderous works*, that men may ſpeak of the *might* of thy *marvellous acts*, and tell of thy greatneſs! Thou art loving unto every man, and thy mercy is over all thy works. Let *all nature* praiſe thee, *O Lord*, and thy *ſaints* give thanks unto thee. For thy kingdom is an *everlaſting kingdom*, and thy dominion endureth throughout all ages. Thy *power*, thy *glory*, and thy *mightineſs*, are known unto men: for when thou openeſt thine hand thou filleſt all things living with plenteouſneſs!

30.

For the ſame.

I will be glad and rejoice in thee, O LORD MOST HIGH, and my ſongs will I make in thy name. For thou haſt maintained *my right* and *my cauſe*; thou ſitteſt in *the throne*, and judgeſt right! Thou wilt judge the world, O LORD, and miniſter *righteouſneſs*. O defend the *oppreſſed*, and be a refuge to the *diſtreſſed ſoul*, that they which know thy name may put their truſt in thee, who *never* faileſt them that ſeek thee!

31.

For the ſame.

O ALMIGHTY LORD, who delighteſt in the happineſs of thy creatures, accept the humble tribute of my thanks for thy unbounded mercies in the *redemption* of

mankind! *Thy glory*, O LORD, *is above the heavens!* In what *exalted* ſtrains ſhall I pour out my heart, for all thy mercies to me a *miſerable* ſinner! O let the remembrance of thy favor, *elevate my ſpirit*, and thy loving kindneſs enliven my heart, as the morning dews refreſh the earth!

32.

For the ſame.

Praiſed and magnified be thy name, *O God*, for ever and ever! With the deepeſt humility of ſoul I caſt up *my longing eyes* towards thy mercy-ſeat; and proſtrate myſelf in the contemplation of thy adorable perfections! *Lord*, what can that language be, which can expreſs thy *praiſe?* Thou art *God from everlaſting!* Millions of ages are but as a *moment in thy ſight*; and I am but *duſt and aſhes.*—But thou haſt given me *life*, and *thought*, and *powers*, *to worſhip thee*; and I will worſhip thee with my whole heart! Thou haſt given me *voice to ſing*, O let me chant *hallelujahs* to thy praiſe, and worſhip before thee *for ever and ever!*

33.

For the ſame.

O Lord God almighty, *Father of angels and men*, whoſe *glory* is far beyond the reach of *mortal eyes*, I beſeech thee *exerciſe* my *heart* in the *ſincereſt love of truth!* *Cheriſh* my *reaſon*, and *ſtrengthem* my *faith*, that I may trace out ſome of thy *perfections*, and *adore* thee in the *operations*

rations of thy hands! — How *wonderful* are all thy works, *O Lord of heaven!* — Let the *regular return* of *day* and *night*, *ſummer* and *winter*, teach me to worſhip thy *ſupreme*, *almighty power!* — whilſt the contemplation of the *beautiful face of the earth*, and the more *glorious luminaries of the heavens*, bring thee ſtill *cloſer to my ſoul*; and when I look up to heaven, *let my heart be filled with gladneſs!*

34.

For the ſame.

O moſt gracious God, whoſe *full perfections* are *paſt* finding out, teach me to *adore* thy *attributes*; let my *faith in them* take ſuch deep root in my heart, as never to be ſhaken by *time* or *accidents!* Let my *awe* of thy *eternal juſtice*, and my *repoſe* in thy *loving kindneſs* and *mercy*, daily increaſe, till my *obedience* to the precepts of thy holy religion becomes *pure* and *unſpotted*. And whilſt I preſs forward in my duty, ſtill let the *conſciouſneſs* of my frailneſs, *humble* my ſoul before thee, even to the duſt of the earth! Still let me fly for mercy, where *only* it can be found: ſtill *direct* my ſteps to the croſs of my *bleeding Saviour*, there to implore *forgiveneſs* through his interceſſion and mediation, at thy throne!

35.

For a good life in general (for the morning.)

O ALMIGHTY GOD, the great Creator and ſovereign Lord of angels and men! Father of light, who dwelleſt in

the light which no man can approach, accept my tribute of praiſe for all thy mercies; for giving me life and all things that pertain unto it: for preſerving me from accidents this night paſt, and giving me refreſhing ſleep. But above all I praiſe thee, O Lord, from the inmoſt receſſes of my ſoul, that inſtead of leaving me in *darkneſs*, and the *ſhadow of death*, thou haſt given me a lively hope in the death and reſurrection of *Jeſus Chriſt*. Accept my thanks, O Lord, for the frequent opportunities afforded me, to fit and *prepare* my ſoul for *the great day of account*. Notwithſtanding my abuſe of thy *patience*, thou haſt ſtill given me *this day* to work out my ſalvation, O let me do it with *fear* and *trembling!* For theſe ſignal favors, for thy exceeding great and precious promiſes, thy praiſe ſhall ever be in my mouth. I will be *glad* and *rejoice* in thee, and my ſongs ſhall be made to thy praiſe. Unworthy as I am of thy favor, yet filled with the ſenſe of thy goodneſs and forbearance, I am *reſolved* to live no longer to *myſelf*, but *to him who redeemed me by his blood!* I will endevor to conquer my ſin, and particularly *that* which doth ſo eaſily beſet me, and run with patience the race that is ſet before me. But I am not *ſufficient* of myſelf for theſe things, or even to *think* any thing that is good. Without thee I can do nothing! My ſufficiency ſtandeth in thy name, O Lord, who haſt made heaven and earth. O ſtrengthen me with might by thy *holy Spirit*, to ſubdue my evil and corrupt inclinations; that *denying* myſelf, I may proceed chearfully in the paths of virtue and religion.

36.

For the ſame (at any time.)

Preſerve, O LORD, my *going out* and my *coming in*, and let thy *bleſſing* accompany me in whatever I take in hand. Give me grace to keep my tongue from evil, and my lips that they ſpeak no guile; and to practiſe *bowels of mercy*, *kindneſs*, *humbleneſs of mind*, *meekneſs*, *long ſuffering*, forgiving the offences of others. And may the awful conſideration of the great and terrible day, when thou wilt judge the ſecrets of men, by *Jeſus Chriſt*, influence my thoughts, words, and actions, that I may always take heed to my ways, and be accounted worthy to ſtand before the *ſon of man*; and to receive that great reward which he will beſtow on them that diligently ſeek him. And may the *raviſhing* thoughts of that *boundleſs happineſs*, reſerved in heaven for the *juſt*, induce me to ſet my *affections on things above*, and not on *things on the earth*: that I may be at once *encouraged* and *enabled* to bear with *patience* and *reſignation* all thoſe *croſſes*, *diſappointments*, and *misfortunes*, which are the inſeparable companion of this preſent life: remembering always that I am in thy hand, O God. And let me rejoice that this *light affliction*, which is but for a *moment*, worketh for me *a far more exceeding and eternal weight of glory*; and that after *patient continuance* in well doing, I ſhall receive *glory*, and *honor*, and *immortality*, and drink of thy *pleaſures as out of a river*. — Thou

knoweſt

knoweſt beſt my condition, my deſires, and my real wants. Thine infinite wiſdom knoweth, whether it be beſt for me to *abound*, or to *ſuffer need*: O do thou, *inexhauſtible fountain of mercy*, ſuit thy bleſſings to my ſeveral neceſſities, leading me with thy *council* in order to receive me into thy glory!

37.

For the morning.

O merciful God, the mighty guardian and *protector* of mankind, who haſt ſafely brought me to the *beginning* of this day; *continue* thy *favor* to me! *Ponder* my words, O Lord, and *conſider my meditation!*—I am going into a world ſurrounded by *ſnares*, and beſet with *temptations*: let my *remembrance* of thy *wonders of old*, and the *mercies* which thou haſt ſhewn to me, keep my *gratitude* in *all* its *vigor*; and the *hopes* of thy *future favor* add ſtrength to my *vigilance* and *care*. Guard my *heart*, and keep the *door* of my *lips*, that I may *never* treſpaſs on thy righteous laws!

38.

For the ſame.

O Lord of mercy, behold thy ſervant who is *riſen* from the *death of ſleep!*—I offer up the *tribute* of my *humble* thanks for this, and all thy mercies vouchſafed unto me. Defend me, *O God*, from all the perils to which I am expoſed! Inſpire me with firm reſolutions of obedience to thy commandments, that I may never loſe ſight of the *bright example* of my *bleſſed Saviour!* Let it be my hourly

hourly *joy* to diſcharge *every* duty with a ſtrict attention to thy *holy word*; that preſenting myſelf conſtantly before thee, *my whole life* may become as *one continued prayer!* Give me ſo *true* a knowledge of my *dependance* on *thee*, that I may *accept*, with an *humble and a contrite ſpirit*, whatever THOU ſhalt think *needful for me!*

39.

In ſickneſs.

O Lord God omnipotent, who filleſt immenſity with thy preſence, and ſendeſt thy *miniſtering ſpirits* to relieve the *diſtreſſes* of thy creatures! *Favorably, with mercy, hear my ſupplications!* Thus languiſhing on the bed of ſickneſs, o'erwhelm'd with fear and trouble, I fly to thee! O Lord, forgive my paſt offences; and ſuffer not the *pains of my body to diſtract my mind*, or weaken my *faith* in thee. Let me look back, with joy, at thy wondrous goodneſs, for all the *dreadful ſnares of ſin* which I have eſcaped; whilſt *I tremble*, with the anguiſh of a *bleeding heart*, at the numberleſs offences which I have committed againſt thee. Thou knoweſt whereof I am made, and the *evils* to *which I have been expoſed. O be merciful unto me; ſtrengthen my heart, and teach me how to die:* that to my *laſt expiring breath* I may repoſe my *truſt* in thy mercy, through *Jeſus Chriſt my Redeemer!*

40.

In the ſame.

O Father of mercy, and God of my life, ſend me thy *ſaving health*, that whether I *live* or *die*, I may not be

entangled

entangled in the world, nor my ſoul *eſtranged* from thee! I am *enfeebled* by ſickneſs, and *diſtracted* with pain; rouze my *drooping ſpirits*, *O Lord!* Expand my *heart*, and enlarge my *views*, that I may look forward, *with joy*, on the vaſt proſpect of *eternity* that lies before me! Had I a *thouſand years* to live, my *prayers* and *praiſes* ſhould fill up every *hour!* but if *my time* is come; if it is now *thy pleaſure* to break theſe *chains of mortality*;—O *receive* me into the *everlaſting* manſions of thy bliſs; there, *with more exalted powers of ſoul*, let me ſing *hallelujahs* to thy praiſe, for ever and ever!—I am not *worthy*, *O Lord*, of the leaſt of thy *mercies! I am not worthy to caſt up mine eyes to heaven!* O let the inеſtimable merits of my *bleſſed Redeemer* plead for my ſoul! Let his *all-powerful* interceſſion prevail for me; that *through him* I may find *acceptance* with *thee! Save me, O Lord, for thy mercies are infinite!*

41.

In the ſame.

O Lord almighty, thou tender parent of all the children of men, extend thy compaſſion to *me!* Thus drooping in ſickneſs, and languiſhing in diſeaſe, touched with a deep ſenſe of my *paſt ſins*, and *preſent miſery*, with the profoundeſt awe I *humble* my ſoul before thee! O *prepare* my ſpirit for that approaching hour, when I ſhall appear at thy *judgment-ſeat!* — There let the wounds of my *bleeding Saviour* plead my *cauſe!* There let his *powerful mediation* ſue for my *pardon!* There let HIS *interceſſion*

can compenſate for MY *imperfect ſervice!* Blot out from thy remembrance the *numberleſs* tranſgreſſions of my life; and let me devote the *remainder* of it, to *adore*, and *praiſe*, and *magnify* thy glorious name, through the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt, the mighty Saviour and Redeemer of the world!*

42.

In the ſame.

O Almighty and omniſcient God, who conſidereſt that we are but *men*, have *mercy* upon me, and ſend me thy *comfort* from above! Let the *humble offering of theſe tears*, the only ſacrifice I now can make, be ſtill accepted by thee. O *hear* my prayers, and withhold not *thy peace* from my *anxious heart!* Let not the *ſorrows of* DEATH compaſs me about, nor do I *implore* thee to *arreſt* his arm; for *thou knoweſt* which of the two is beſt for me, or *life* or *death*; *and let thy will be done!* If my hour is come, in which this vital heat and motion is to ceaſe; to thy hands I commend my ſpirit, *for* THOU *haſt redeemed me, O Lord, thou God of mercy! O bleſſed Jeſus*, who art the *reſurrection* and the *life*, be THOU my *defence in death! Guard* me againſt all the adverſaries of my ſoul! Let the remembrance of thy *agonies* and *bloody ſweat*, and thoſe ſufferings, which no human heart can meaſure or conceive, give me *patience* and *reſignation*; that I may keep *thy bright example* in my view, and *glory* even in *death!*— *Compoſe* my thoughts, *O Lord*, and let my ſpirit *reſt* in ſtedfaſt hope, that I may *never be confounded!*

43.

43.

In the ſame.

O ALMIGHTY LORD, who art a ſtrong tower to all them that put their truſt in thee, to whom all things in *heaven* and *earth* do bow, be thou my *defence on this verge of life,!* I know there is none other name under heaven, by which I can receive health or ſalvation, give me then a heart, *O Lord*, to fly to thee, in the name of my bleſſed Redeemer!

44.

In the ſame.

O GRACIOUS LORD OF HEAVEN, I beſeech thee, as I feel my *bodily ſtrength* decay, my *hope* in thee may *ſpring forth and floriſh* with redoubled force; and thy *grace* and *holy Spirit invigorate my ſoul!* Give me *an unfeigned repentance* for all the errors of my paſt life, and a ſtedfaſt faith in *Jeſus Chriſt* thy Son; that my ſins may be done away, by thy *mercy*, and my *pardon ſealed in heaven.* And as my diſſolution ſeemeth to draw near, O *fit* and *prepare* me for the dread hour, that *I may die in peace*, and my *ſoul* be received into thine everlaſting kingdom, through the merits and mediation of the great Interceſſor and Redeemer, the ſame Jeſus Chriſt!

IN THE FORM OF

PRAYERS

1.

For benefactors.

ALMIGHTY AND MOST MERCIFUL FATHER, by whoſe tender compaſſion our feet are ſet in the *paths of righteouſneſs*, accept our humble prayer for all the inſtruments of thy mercies to us. Make their days *happy*; and give them the *joyful hopes of pleaſing thee*. Let their *piety* and *compaſſion*, and all their *anxious efforts to ſave the ſouls of others*, plead for their own immortal ſpirits at thy throne, *O God!*—Thou haſt ſhewn thy favor to us: we beſeech thee to extend thy *loving kindneſs* to all the *children of men!* Be thou a *tower of defence*, that no affliction may reach them! This we beg through the mediation of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the great friend of mankind, who offered up his *life*, that we might *live for ever*; and who now *liveth* and *reigneth* at thy *right hand*, *O Father eternal*, and thou *O bleſſed holy Spirit*, *one ſupreme almighty God!* Amen.

2.

For the ſame.

O Lord God of heaven, mercifully behold the faithfulneſs of all thoſe who ſerve thee with a *pure and willing mind!*

mind! Shower down thy choiceſt bleſſings on the heads of our *benefactors*. Increaſe their *piety*, and *proſper their labors* in thy vineyard, that it may bring forth an abundant increaſe, to the preſent and everlaſting good, and happineſs of mankind; and ſo diſpoſe *their* hearts to do that which is right in thine eyes, that *they* may ſave their own ſouls alive! This we beg, *O merciful Father*, through the mediation of *Jeſus Chriſt our bleſſed Lord and Redeemer!* Amen.

3.

For Grace.

O Lord of righteouſneſs, and Father of eternal glory! thou great original from whom all things proceed! Cheriſh us with the bright beams of thy grace, and *heavenly benediction!* Shed on us the dew of thy *mercy!* Scatter the clouds of *ignorance* that ſurround us; and render our *obedience* ſo *perfect*, that we may never ſtray from the ways of thy commandments. This we beg for *Jeſus Chriſt his ſake*, our bleſſed Lord and Saviour! Amen.

BIBLIOTHECA BODLEIANA

4.

On Thankſgiving.

Father of mercy, and God of conſolation, who haſt ſent thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt* to redeem mankind; we give thee our moſt *humble* and *grateful thanks* for the bountiful proviſion made for our ſpiritual and temporal neceſſities; and we beſeech thee ſo to diſpoſe our hearts by the influence of thy bleſſed Spirit, that through *ſincere repentance*,

tance, and *a ſtedfaſt faith*, we may live hereafter as become the *true diſciples of Chriſt*, and enjoy all the glorious promiſes of his goſpel. This we beg for the ſake of the ſame *Jeſus Chriſt*, the bleſſed Redeemer of the world. Amen!

5.

For Gratitude.

O Lord and tender Father of mankind, we pour out our hearts in thankful acknowledgments of thy unutterable goodneſs towards us! Teach us ever to be watchful, that we may expreſs our gratitude, by our *obedience*. Teach us thy will, O Lord, that our lives may be *conſtantly* devoted to *thy ſervice*, and every hour employed to *thy glory*. This we beg for the ſake of *Jeſus Chriſt*, who *died* that we might *live for ever!* Amen!

6.

For Gratitude, Concord, and Peace.

O Lord, we beſeech thee, accept the tribute of our thanks for thine *ineſtimable goodneſs* in the *creation*, and thy unbounded mercies in the *redemption* of mankind! Let the remembrance of our paſt dangers, give us the greater comfort in our *preſent retreat*, and ſo effectually teach us thy will, that we may never depart from our obedience to thy holy commandments. Let a true ſpirit of piety reign in our hearts, that *concord*, and *peace*, and *joy* may abound in theſe dwellings, to the *glory of thy name*, and the ſalvation of our immortal ſouls! This we beg through *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. Amen!

7.

For Concord and Agreement.

O merciful Lord, who haſt been graciouſly pleaſed to deliver us from the bondage of ſin, and to ſhow us the paths of righteouſneſs, baniſh far from us all *jealouſy* and *fooliſh contention*; and let no unſeemly word fall from us, to interrupt our peace, or prevent our imitating the meekneſs of our bleſſed Redeemer. This we beg for the ſake of the ſame Jeſus Chriſt our Lord and Saviour! Amen.

8.

For Purity of Converſation.

O Lord almighty, whoſe watchful eye is ever preſent, and ſees our hearts; with ſhame and anguiſh we bewail the foul thoughts, words, and deeds committed againſt thee. Give us thy grace moſt carefully to avoid the ſame for the future! Set a watch, O Lord, at the door of our lips, that no evil diſcourſe may be ever heard amongſt us. This we beg for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake. Amen!

9.

For the ſame.

O Lord, we offer up our ſpirits to thee, in *purity* of heart, and *ſimplicity* of mind. Suffer us not, *O merciful Father*, to provoke thine *anger and wrathful diſpleaſure*, but let this our retreat from ſin, ſo cleanſe our *ſouls* from *pollution*, and our *bodies* from *diſeaſe*; that it may be a *glorious monu-*

ment

ment of thy grace, and all the ends of the earth *ſee* and *adore* thy power! Save us, *O God of mercy*, through the merits of thy ſpotleſs Son our Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*. Amen!

10.

For Forgiveneſs of others.

O merciful Lord God, we beſeech thee, of thine infinite mercy, to forgive the offences we have committed againſt thee, and pardon thoſe who have been the cauſe of our tranſgreſſions! Thy blood, O BLESSED JESUS, was ſhed for thine *enemies*, ſuffer not the companions of our guilt to periſh! Turn their hearts to thy righteous paths, *O Lord*, that they may no longer *rebel* againſt thy commandments. *Turn their hearts, O Lord*, and let them behold *the things which belong to their peace, before they are hid from their eyes for ever!* This we beg, *O merciful Father*, for the ſake of HIS ſpotleſs ſoul who *died* to redeem the world. Amen!

11.

Under Afflictions.

O LORD ALMIGHTY, forget us not in thy *mercy*, nor hide the brightneſs of thy countenance from our *afflicted minds!* Conſider, and hear us, *O Lord God*, that our hearts may be *joyful in thy ſalvation!* Our *Fathers* hoped in thee, under all their *afflictions*, and thou didſt deliver them. Help *us*, O LORD, that we may put our truſt in thee! Thou deſpiſeſt not the contrite heart;

hide not thy face from us when we call upon *thee*. Diſplay thy *glory*, O LORD *of heaven*, and ſuccor us for thy *mercies* ſake, that all the kindreds of the nations may ſee thy *goodneſs*, and *parental care*, O FATHER ALMIGHTY, for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake. Amen!

12.

Under the ſame.

O Lord God of Iſrael, we put our truſt in thee! Hear us, we beſeech thee, for thy *mercies ſake*. Whilſt the whole earth pays homage to thee, lift us up, that we may magnify thy name, *O Lord of heaven!* Incline thine ear unto us, who ſtretch forth our hands unto thee; and let our prayer come before thy throne! Abhor not our ſouls, O Lord! *Shew* us the way that we ſhould walk in, that we may raiſe our ſouls to thee. *Teach* us to do that which pleaſes thee, that thy Spirit may direct *our paths in righteouſneſs*. Accept this our humble petition, *O Lord God omnipotent*, through the mediation of the *mighty Prince and Saviour of the world*. Amen!

13.

For Induſtry and Reſignation.

O almighty Lord, who in thy wiſdom haſt appointed the various offices of human life, we beſeech thee, whatever we *do*, or *think*, that it may be to *thy glory*. Let every day add new ſtrength to the *good habits* which we are now endevoring to acquire. *Confirm them, O Lord*, whilſt

whilſt the opportunity is afforded us, that they may make the deepeſt impreſſion on our minds. *Confirm them, O merciful Father*, that we may delight to exerciſe our *hearts in piety, and our hands in labor!* Give us, *O Lord*, ſuch upright minds, that we may acquit ourſelves acceptably in thy ſight, through the remainder of our days: and when the *toilſome journey of life* is ended, receive us, *O Lord*, into thy *heavenly reſt*, for the ſake of *Jeſus Chriſt* our Lord. Amen!

FOR ONE PERSON.

14.

For Contentment.

O eternal Lord, who in the gracious diſpenſations of thy providence hath appointed *my* ſtate and condition, baniſh from my heart all *murmuring* and *diſcontent:* give me a *meek* and *humble* ſpirit, and let the reſtraints of my calling become *pleaſant* to me; that as I am freed from the anxious cares of *power* and *riches*, my *ſerioufneſs* and *piety* may be the more improved, and every *hardſhip* in my *ſervice* diſcipline my ſpirit, and train me up to *virtue*; and lead me, O Lord, in the ſteps of my *great maſter Jeſus Chriſt!* Amen.

15.

For Induſtry, and Reſignation to Providence.

O Lord God almighty, who haſt ordained, by thy *unchangeable decrees* that *man* ſhall eat his bread in *toil* and *labor*, give me, I beſeech thee, a *thoughtful* and *induſtrious* diſpoſition. Let my *diligence* and *innocency* go hand in

hand, and adminiſter to their *mutual* ſupport. Teach me an *entire ſubmiſſion* to thy *will*, and give me ſo *true* a *reliſh* of an *humble* condition, that the *life* of my *bleſſed Saviour*, and the *glorious example* he hath ſet before mine eyes, may appear with a *far brighter luſtre* than any earthly glory! This I beg, *O Lord*, for HIS ſake who redeemed this ſinful world. Amen!

16.

For Fidelity in Servitude.

O Lord, the righteous judge of men, let thy *fear* be always before mine eyes, that I may *faithfully* diſcharge my duty, nor ever fall under THY diſpleaſure. Let neither *indolence* nor *falſhood* betray my ſoul; but make me zealous in my *maſter's ſervice* *, that my conduct towards him may expreſs my *gratitude*, for all *the mercies*, which THOU haſt vouchſafed unto me. Thy all-piercing eye, *O Lord*, can ſee my inmoſt thoughts, and minuteſt actions! Let my *love* and *honor*, my *fidelity* and *reſpect* for my maſter, be apparent in *his* ſight, that I may delight in promoting *his* proſperity: and let *our united* endevors advance *thy* glory, and the *happineſs* of mankind. Give him, *O Lord*, a juſt ſenſe of his *eternal* obligations to *juſtice* and *piety*, *temperance*, and every other virtue, that no part of his conduct may diſturb the repoſe of my ſoul, but render my *ſincerity* towards him the more acceptable to thee. This I beg, O merciful Father, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake. Amen!

17.

* *Or miſtreſs's ſervice.*

17.

For Obedience in Servitude.

O Almighty Lord, who delighteſt in the obedience of thy creatures, give me a *meek* and *contrite ſpirit*, that imitating the humility of my *Lord* and *Saviour*, I may obtain that REST of ſoul, that PEACE of *mind*, which is far beyond what the world can give. Inſpire my heart with an utter abhorrence of all *falſhood* and *evaſion*; and let me *dare* to confeſs the truth, to whomſoever has a right to require it. Make me *patient* under *reproof*, and *diligent* in performing my duty; that my *obedience* to my * maſter may be accepted as *obedience to thee*. Remove far from me all *pride* and *haughtineſs* of ſpirit, and teach me how to ſupport myſelf under *unjuſt reproaches*, that with *patience*, and *reſolution*, and *ſingleneſs of heart*, I may ſubdue *evil* with *good*, and ever poſſeſs my ſoul in *tranquility*. — Let my *conſcience* be always void of offence *towards thee*, and my *fellow-creatures*, that amidſt all the *follies* and *iniquities* which ſurround me, I may acquit myſelf with *applauſe* in *thy* ſight, *O Lord*, and receive the great reward which thou haſt promiſed, in *Jeſus Chriſt* my *bleſſed Lord* and *Saviour*. Amen!

18.

For Gratitude.

Almighty and moſt *merciful Father*, who of thine infinite goodneſs haſt delivered me out of the hands of the deſtroyer,

* *Or miſtreſs.*

ſtroyer, and preſerved me by the *kindneſs of my fellow-creatures*, teach me how to promote *their happineſs*, that whilſt I pour out my heart in the *warmeſt gratitude* to thee, I may advance the *great cauſe* of virtue and religion in the world. Let thy *returning ſabbaths*, which I have ſo often abuſed, always *inſpire* my heart with *thankſgiving*, and bring me freſh conſolation. Teach me to *delight* in thy *worſhip*, and to *adore* thy name *with the moſt exalted joy*; that the *incenſe* of my prayers may reach thy throne, *O God!* And thoſe *neceſſary* things, which for my *unworthineſs* I *dare* not, and for my *blindneſs* I *cannot* aſk, thou mayeſt vouchſafe to *give me*, for the merits of thy dear Son, my bleſſed *Saviour* and *Redeemer*. Amen!

19.

At the point of Death.

O ALMIGHTY GOD, to whom belong the iſſues of *life* and *death*, viſit my trembling heart, and ſave me for thy mercies ſake! Receive my ſpirit, O Lord, into thoſe heavenly habitations, where the ſouls of them that ſleep in Chriſt enjoy perpetual *reſt and happineſs!* Grant this, O merciful Father, for the ſake of the ſame Jeſus Chriſt, my bleſſed Lord and Redeemer! Amen.

20.

On the ſame.

Father of angels and men, almighty Lord and Creator of univerſal Being, in whom do live the ſpirits of the juſt

made

made perfect! O let my ſoul be acceptable in thy ſight! Waſh it in the blood of that immaculate Lamb which was ſhed to take away the ſins of the world; that the *defilements* I have contracted may be *purged* away, and my ſoul be accepted through the merits of *Jeſus Chriſt*. And thou, O bleſſed Redeemer of the world, forgive my tranſgreſſions, and plead my cauſe at the throne of mercy. Amen!

21.

For the Evening.

O Lord God almighty, who by thy provident care haſt conducted me in ſafety to the concluſion of this day; forgive the offences which I have been guilty of againſt thee, whether in *thought*, or *word*, or by any *action* unworthy my character as a chriſtian, that I may retire to reſt in humble confidence of thy *protection*. Let the return of the hour of ſleep remind me of the *ſhortneſs of life, and teach me what it is to die!* — Thus kneeling in thy *awful preſence* I offer up the *ſacrifice of my heart*; accept it, *O Lord*, as my *evening oblation*; and hearken unto my unfeigned *prayer!* Baniſh from me all *evil deſires*, that my own heart may not conſpire to my ruin. *Protect* me, I beſeech thee, from all the perils of this night. Be thou my *guard*, and *my defence*, and finally receive me into thy *eternal reſt*, for *Jeſus Chriſt his ſake*. Amen!

Morning

Morning HYMN.

Awake my glory 'ere the roſy morn
Doth with a purple bluſh the ſkies adorn:
Awake each faculty, awake and ſing,
In holy raptures my Almighty King!

In notes divine let my glad voice proclaim,
His mighty goodneſs and eternal name!
Let my loud praiſes through the world reſound,
While crowding nations liſten all around!

But, O *my God*, thy wonders are too great
For tongue to ſpeak, or verſe to celebrate:
So vaſt thy mercies, and thy truth ſo high,
They pierce the clouds, and reach beyond the ſky!

Morning Ejaculations.

Unto thee lift I up mine eyes: O *thou* that dwelleſt in the heavens!

Let my complaint come before thee, *O Lord:* Give me underſtanding according to thy word!

My help cometh from thee, *O Lord*, who hath made heaven and earth! Hold *thou* me up, and I ſhall be *ſafe*.

Make me to go in the paths of *thy* commandments, for therein is my *deſire*.

Evening Ejaculations.

Bleſſed art thou, *O Lord*; O teach me thy ſtatutes!

Thy words have I hid within my heart, that I ſhould not ſin againſt thee.

With

With my lips have I been telling of all the judgments of thy mouth.

Thou haſt granted me thy loving kindneſs in the *day-time*. In the *night-ſeaſon* will I ſing, and make my prayer unto thee, *O God of my life!*

Night HYMN.

Sleep is a death, O make me try,
By ſleeping what it is to die;
And down as gently lay my head,
Within my grave, as on my bed.

How e'er I reſt, *great God!* let me,
Awake again at laſt with thee;
And thus aſſur'd, behold I lie,
Securely, or to wake or die.

Theſe are my drowſy days, in vain
I do now wake, to ſleep again;
O *come* that hour, when I ſhall never
Sleep again, but wake for ever!

On free Agency.

LETTER XIV.

To the ſame.

THOSE know but little of the human heart, who do not perceive an evident inconſiſtency in it. No one can be ignorant that there is a perpetual ſtruggle between his *good* and *evil* propenſities. This ſeems to mark out, in the *ſtrongeſt characters*, our being fallen from ſomething we *originally* were, *agreeably to what is related in the ſacred writings, of the fall of man:* and however ſome may pretend to refine away the plain ſenſe and meaning of the ſcriptures, we can never make that account more intelligible; nor can we, by any forced conſtruction, convert it into an *allegory*, without ſubjecting the whole ſcripture to be conſtrued by every individual, as his *fancy* may ſuggeſt to him.

This ſad truth is evident, at this day, that one *wilful ſin* plays havoc with the ſoul, and as a wound weakens and corrodes the whole frame of the body, ſo does the tranſgreſſion of the divine commandment pervert the true current of our thoughts, and incline our ſouls, that is, our wills and affections, not only to the repetition of the ſame fault, but alſo of many others. Hence we may infer how it came to paſs, that man *is* what we find him to be, though originally made very differently.

That

That we are *free* cannot poſſibly admit of any wiſe man's doubt; yet our belief or aſſurance that we are *free* ſeems to be often ſuſpended, as if we wiſhed that we were *not free*; which in fact is wiſhing that we might act from *inſtinct*, and not from *reaſon*; and that from being next in order to *angels*, we might be on a level with *brutes*. The ſublime *Milton*, ſpeaking of the determinations of the great author of nature, reſpecting man, ſays,

" ——— *I made him* juſt *and* right,
" Sufficient *to have ſtood, though* free *to fall.*
" *Such I created all th'* æthereal *pow'rs,*
" *And* ſpirits, *both them who* ſtood, *and them who*
" fail'd:
" Freely *they* ſtood, *who ſtood*; *and* fell, *who fell.*
" Not free, *what* proof *cou'd they have giv'n* ſincere
" *Of* true allegiance, conſtant faith, *or* love,
" *Where only what* they needs muſt do, *appeared,*
" Not *what they* wou'd? *What* PRAISE *cou'd* they
" *receive?*
" *What* PLEASURE I, *from* ſuch obedience *paid,*
" *When* will *and* reaſon, *(reaſon alſo is choice)*
" Uſeleſs *and* vain, *of* freedom *both deſpoil'd,*
" *Made* paſſive *both, had ſerv'd* NECESSITY,
" *Not* ME?" ———

Who in his *right mind* can reſiſt this plain *reaſoning*? You need only knock at *your own breaſt*, and enquire of *your own heart*, if you do *what you can do*; and if you

do it with a *willing mind?* What *greater end* can there be in life, than to *worſhip God*, and as far as our limited powers will carry us, to diſplay the glory of the MOST HIGH in the redemption of mankind, by his Son *Jeſus Chriſt*; ever remembering that his *mercy* is as infinite as his *wiſdom:* and as he knows of what we are made, it is an offence againſt his *mercy* and *wiſdom* to preſume that he does not make all thoſe allowances, which our reaſon and knowledge of his promiſes ſuggeſt to us, will be conſidered by *infinite wiſdom*, eſpecially when we find, by the experience of the beſt of men, that with all the exertion of our powers, there is reaſon to fear we ſhould otherwiſe periſh.

On the other hand, to *expect* that he will *overlook* what our *own hearts condemn*; and take no cognizance of *crimes* which the moſt careleſs obſerver conſiders as *puniſhable*, if they are not *repented* of, is equally an *affront* to the *wiſdom* and *juſtice* of *God*.

Our great misfortune is, that we generally impute ſo *much* to our *depravity*, or deviation from that *original better ſtate*; and ſo *little* to our own *conſcious neglect*, which we blend under the *common name of depravity*, that we often refine away the *ſubſtance* of *repentance:* and conſequently are heedleſs in the performance of it, notwithſtanding the *conſciouſneſs* of *our offences*, which we know we ought *in all reaſon* to repent of, in *ſackcloth and aſhes*. In *this view* there is great danger that *our own hearts* will be *ingenious* to *deceive* us, and deal *unfairly*, by inducing us to neglect the *proper means*, and the uſe of ſuch *abi-*

lity, as GOD has given us, to *chuſe* the *beſt*, and to *refuſe* the *worſt*.

To form a true idea of our condition, we muſt conſider, that *deliberate* and *habitual ſins* ought ever to ſtand diſtinguiſhed from thoſe of *miſtake* or *ſurpriſe*; and in order to repentance, we ſhould ſee the *folly*, as well as the *malignity* of *ſin*. I dare ſay you have often imagined that you was enjoying the moſt deſirable thing in nature, I mean *liberty*, in *doing as you pleaſed*, at the very time that you was a *ſlave* to the power and dominion of your *vicious appetites*, or *fooliſh fancy*. We may amuſe ourſelves with fine-ſpun notions; but the *chriſtian religion* moſt aſſuredly lays us under *reſtraints*: yet examine them *attentively*, and you will find they are ſuch reſtraints, as naturally produce the *true and real freedom of the mind*, which is the very thing on earth, moſt grateful to *human nature*.

To ſuppoſe that the *ſervice of God* is *ſlavery*, is to make the *Almighty* a *Tyrant*; or to imagine that the *ſervice of the Devil* is *freedom*, is to make him a *juſt prince*. We often impoſe on ourſelves; we call things by *wrong names*, and fix *falſe ideas* to them; and thus it happens that we *hug* the moſt *cruel bondage*, and call it *freedom*; and we *mean* the *freedom* of acting as we pleaſe; and conſequently if we had pleaſed to be *virtuous*, we might have been ſo. But we may for the ſame reaſon, if we pleaſe, barter away our *freedom* for *ſlavery*. "If a man's *body* be under *con-*
"*finement*, or he be impotent in his limbs, he is then
"deprived of his *bodily liberty*: and for the ſame reaſon,
"if his *mind* be blinded by *ſottiſh errors*, and his *reaſon*
"over-

" over-ruled by *violent paſſions*; this is plainly as great " *ſlavery*, and as *true a confinement*. It is very evident, " that what *impotency of limbs*, or *bonds*, are to the *natural* " *liberty* of the *body*; the very ſame thing is *vice*, *igno-* " *rance*, or *paſſion*, to the *moral liberty of the mind*. " Wherefore as the *body* is *free*, when it is moved by " the natural action of the *blood* and *ſpirits*, and not by " the *convulſive motions* and *violence of a diſeaſe*; ſo the " *mind* is *then*, and then only *free*, when its *choice* is di- " rected by the natural motive of *right reaſon*, and not " by the violent *force* of *a blind* and *headſtrong paſſion*." In the mean while, " the higheſt improvement and *per-* " *fection of liberty*, in the preſent life, is, when a man " not only obeys the *commands of God*, but does it *habi-* " *tually* with *eaſe* and *pleaſure*."

Thus you ſee how much depends on *habit*, and the acquiſition of that *freedom*, which is the price of our *labor*, after the true *riches* of the mind: and recourſe to the *divine aid*, to acquire true happineſs, is the ultimate end of our purſuits. The grace of God is the only counterpoiſe to the *ſinful propenſities* of our *corrupted* nature; but if we uſe our own freedom, in its true and proper extent, that *grace* will never be denied to us, though it is preſumption to fix the *time* and *manner* of its operation. Farewel.

On Repentance.

LETTER XV.

To the ſame.

YOU ſee that I am not *ſcanty* in my zeal for the ſervice of thoſe whoſe cauſe I eſpouſe. As you are now in a capacity of thinking *what you have been about*, I hope you will alſo think of what you *ought to do*; and that you will *not* conſider *repentance* as a word of little or no ſignification: it has a ſtrong meaning in the *common affairs of life*, and if there is a *heaven* or a *hell*, it cannot be leſs important with reſpect to *eternity*. Virtue claims our bluſhes in ſecret, if we act improperly; ſhall we be *leſs aſhamed* when mens eyes are upon us? It is neceſſary for you to live in ſome degree expoſed to *obſervation*, even in your retirement: ſeveral of you muſt * ſleep in the ſame room; ſome may not be *ſo piouſly* inclined as others; but I truſt you will find that *no one* will have the *outragious impudence* to *ſay* any thing that is *indecent*, *improper*, or unbecoming the condition of one who pretends to be a *penitent*: but if ſhe ſhould, I adviſe you by all means to admoniſh her: let it be done in *gentle words*, but not without ſuch *reſolution* as ſhall

* Four, five, or ſix perſons, according to the number in the houſe, ſleep in one room.

ſhall indicate that you are *determined* not to *connive* at any thing which is contrary to the pious deſign of the *inſtitution*; and the declaration *which ſhe made upon her admittance, that ſhe would conform to the rules of the houſe.* If one, ſo perverſe, ſhould happen to come into *your ward*, remind her in the moſt *perſuaſive terms*, that the *exiſtence* of ſuch a charity as this, depends on the objects of it being reſtrained within the bounds of that *decency*, which it is *infamous* to neglect in *common life*, much more ſo if tranſgreſſed by thoſe, who, conſcious of an accumulated *load* of *guilt*, fly from the world to *implore* the pardon of an *offended God!*

With reſpect to yourſelf in particular, to whoſe *underſtanding* I am now appealing, as your friend, let me entreat you by all the ſacred *tyes of love to God*, to endevor to *remember the time paſt*, only to *repent* of it, and to forget all thoſe abominable ſcenes,

" *Which blot the face and bluſh of modeſty.*"

" *Let modeſt matrons at the* MENTION *ſtart,*
" *And bluſhing virgins, when they read the* ANNALS,
" *Skip o'er the guilty page.*" ——

If your heart labors not with *anxious efforts* to purge away its *filth*; nor ſees with *indignation* thoſe crimes, which you *profeſs* to *repent* of, where is your *ſincerity?*

" SEEMING DEVOTION *does but gild a knave,*
" *That's neither faithful, honeſt, juſt, nor brave:*

" *But*

" *But where* RELIGION *does with* VIRTUE *join,*
" *It makes a woman like an angel ſhine.*"

True *penitence* is the *object* you have now in view: it is the *foundation* of your *hope*, and the *remedy of your affliction.* Inſtead of *daring* to profane your tongue with any *unhallowed* ſounds, rather in the *energic* language of the poet,

" *Let wretches loaded hard with guilt, as you are,*
" *Bow with the weight, and groan beneath the burden,*
" *Creep, with the remnant of the ſtrength they've left,*
" *Before the footſtool of the heav'n they've injured.*"

Remember that you are now *learning* a *leſſon*, of no leſs importance than how to *appear before the God* that made you; and you muſt be *ſenſible*, it is impoſſible you can be *ignorant* that

" THERE *is no* SHUFFLING, *there the action lies*
" *In its true nature; and we ourſelves compell'd*
" *Ev'n to the teeth and forehead of our faults,*
" *To give in evidence.*" ——

To be a *penitent for the ſin of proſtitution, or for any other ſin*, requires a *deep ſenſe* of the *heinouſneſs* of ſuch ſin; and ſome *time*, and ſome *reflection* are neceſſary, to *learn truly how to repent.* To uſe our *freedom* to do thoſe things which we think *we ought to do*, and which we

have long *neglected*: and to *refrain* from ſuch as we think *we ought not to do*, which we have long *practiced*, is no trifling taſk, for it conſtitutes the moſt eſſential part of *repentance*, and is the beſt and *ſtrongeſt proof* of our *grief* for what is paſt.

Nor ſhould we refine away our *ſorrow*. If *tears* fall from our eyes, as well as *grief* reigns in our hearts, for our *offences againſt men*; ſurely they are no leſs due for *our offences againſt God*. The ſublime *Milton*, with his celeſtial imagination, *ſuppoſes Adam*, after the tranſgreſſion of our firſt parents, in their *laſt extremity*, to expreſs himſelf in theſe words:

" *What better can we do, than to the place*
" *Repairing where* HE *judg'd us, proſtrate fall*
" *Before him reverent, and there confeſs*
" *Humbly our faults, and pardon beg,* WITH TEARS
" *Watering the ground, and with our ſighs the air*
" *Frequenting, ſent from hearts contrite, in ſign*
" *Of ſorrow unfeign'd, and humiliation meek?*
" *Undoubtedly he will relent and turn*
" *From his diſpleaſure; in whoſe look ſerene,*
" *When angry moſt he ſeem'd and moſt ſevere,*
" *What elſe but* FAVOR, GRACE, *and* MERCY *ſhone?*"

The poet goes on,

" *Thus they in lowlieſt plight repentant kneel'd*
" *Praying, for from the mercy-ſeat above*

" *Pre-*

" *Prevenient grace deſcending had remov'd*
" *The ſtony from their hearts, and made new fleſh*
" *Regenerate grow inſtead, that ſighs now breath'd*
" *Unutterable, which the ſpirit of prayer*
" *Inſpir'd, and wing'd for heaven with ſpeedier flight*
" *Than loudeſt oratory.*"

Here one may obſerve, that though the poet ſuppoſes *two* perſons performed this ſolemn act of weeping for their ſins, yet as man and wife they were *one fleſh*; they were alſo privy to each other's guilt, and no other human eye to ſee them *. But if the *general inſtruction* given us by our *great Lord* and *Saviour*, is to *retire* when we *pray*, and that what we do acceptably to God in *ſecret*, will be rewarded *openly*; ſurely we ought not to make this kind of ſorrow for our ſins, the object of any human ſight. There is an indecency in ſome kinds of grief for worldly objects, before the eyes of men; but our tears that fall to appeaſe an *offended God*, are *of a nature* not to be expoſed to *common view:* therefore our modern *ſectaries* and *enthuſiaſts* have very ill underſtood this matter, when they meet together to *quake* or *groan*, to *ſigh* or *weep*, or *hum* in conſort. Thoſe who know the power of *ſympathy* in ſouls, if they have the command of *words* with *action*, can ſet the *paſſions* of a whole aſſembly at work, at their pleaſure, and they *may do it, like actors for gain*, if they are

* The mention of this circumſtance makes me think of the falſe reſerve of ſome married perſons, in regard to being ſeen on their knees by each other.

are ſo diſpoſed: but this may be but *mere acting*, and is ſubject, under ſome circumſtances, to the imputation of *frenzy*, or *hypocriſy*, or a mixture of both.

" *'Tis not alone my inky cloak,*
" *Nor cuſtomary ſuit of ſolemn black,*
" *Nor windy ſuſpiration of forc'd breath;*
" *No, nor the fruitful river in the eye,*
" *Together with all forms, moods, ſhows of grief,*
" *That can denote me truly. Theſe indeed ſeem;*
" *For they are actions that a man might play:*
" *But I have that within that paſſes ſhow,*
" *Theſe but the trappings, and the ſuits of woe.*"

I would not by any means you ſhould imagine, that *honeſt tears* may not occaſionally flow in *public*. Virtue in *diſtreſs*, and *great minds* ſtruggling with *adverſity*, drew tears from the *Son of God himſelf*. And of all mere *human deſigns*, the *theatre*, were it not too frequently abuſed, ſeems beſt calculated to exerciſe this nobleſt paſſion of the *human breaſt*:

" *For this the* TRAGIC MUSE *firſt trod the ſtage,*
" *Commanding tears to flow through ev'ry age:*
" TYRANTS *no more their* SAVAGE *nature kept,*
" *And* FOES TO VIRTUE *wondered how they wept.*"

But if the repreſentation of things can command grief; and *fictitious adverſity* bathe the cheeks in tears; ſurely the

great

great truths of chriſtianity, the *real* diſtreſſes of human nature, with regard to *conſcious guilt* againſt heaven, being *properly* repreſented from the pulpit, may be allowed to produce the ſame effect; but this is foreign to a mechanical kind of grief. Sorrow which ariſes *ſpontaneouſly* dignifies tears; but the conſtant practice of meeting to *quake*, *groan*, &c. is ſo very *ridiculous*, and oftentimes ſo *mere a farce*, that *common modeſty* is put to the bluſh whenever it is mentioned.

You muſt have often obſerved, in the courſe of your life, that the *ingenuous confeſſion* of *faults*, and the *profeſſions of amendment*, have a kind of *magic power* in diſarming the *reſentments* of men. *Guilty* as we may be, ſuch confeſſions ſtill carry along with them the tokens and ſignatures of *inherent virtue*, and delight the *underſtanding*, as well as charm the *hearts* of men, when they are leaſt eſtranged from *God*. *Beauty* has not greater influence on the *imagination* of thoſe who are moſt ſuſceptible of its power, than the *ingenuous* acknowledgments of *paſt faults*, provided it be attended *with an apparent reſolution of amendment for the time to come*: and if this is of ſuch *efficacy* with *frail mortals*, who can only judge from *appearances*; what mighty *hopes* may we not entertain of true *repentance* in the ſight of *God*, whoſe mercy is infinite; whoſe wiſdom is without bounds, and to whom our hearts are *open* as the *mid-day ſun!* And how *fooliſh*, as well as *criminal*, muſt thoſe be, who *pretend* to *repent*, and yet do not *mean* it, though they profeſs a *belief in a*

God; and are *ſenſible*, that their *thoughts* are always open to him as a *tremendous judge!*

It is no leſs obvious, that the mind moves by *ſlow paces: appearances* may *flatter*, but we ought not to expect that great *ſinners* will at once become *great ſaints:* nor can we preſume, where the *heart* is *foul*, that the *tongue* will not ſometimes utter *perverſe things*. Moderation in opinion, as well as in practice, muſt be obſerved, and thoſe enthuſiaſts who are liberal in conſigning their neighbors over to perdition, are ſo far in danger of falling into it themſelves.

Notwithſtanding the great benevolence on which this *Charity* is founded, you may eaſily diſcern, that if a *ſtrict œconomy* and *diſcipline* are not kept up, ſuch a *houſe of penitents*, or ſuch a *temporary retreat* for the *wretched* would be but a *mere name*, and anſwer no purpoſe but to abuſe the *generoſity* of mankind. For this I appeal to *your own reaſon*; and as I entertain *very high hopes of your correcting your own faults*, I flatter myſelf your *good ſenſe*, your humility, your regard to the *inſtitution*, as well as your ſenſe of religion, will all concur, and induce you to be *attentive*, in your proper ſtation, that others may do *their duty* alſo. I mean, that you will do well to give information to the *ſuperiors of the wards* if any thing ſhould be amiſs, that if the evil be not redreſſed, the *matron* may be acquainted. There is no *trifling* with any *falſe notions of honor* and *delicacy*, in a caſe where the *ſtricteſt* order muſt be obſerved. But, I ſay, we muſt take care to proceed with ſo much

meek-

meekneſs, *candor*, and *integrity*, that in mending *one* evil, we may not introduce *another*.

You will be *more particularly* informed how you are to act in theſe caſes, and it will be no leſs an *honor* than it is your *duty*, to ſhew great reſpect to the *matron*, and to thoſe who are appointed by the *governors* to regulate the conduct of the houſe.—The *matron* is *ſenſible* and *polite*, *zealous* for the good of the charity in all reſpects, and very attentive to the great article of is a *ſober* and *religious* deportment, inſtructing the women, at the ſame time, how to get their bread in the world with *credit* and *reputation*.

When I caution you not to *connive* at the *folly* or *iniquity* of others; let your firſt concern be to watch YOURSELF. You ſay that you are ſenſible there is *one* who knows all our *thoughts*, ſees our *actions*, and hears our *words*. Remember that your *thoughts*, *words*, and *actions* have been ſuch as require a *ſtrict amendment!*

I ſhall be glad to hear a good account of you, from the *matron*, who will deliver this into your hands, and extremely rejoiced to be able to make ſuch report of you *from her*, to your *uncle*, as may procure you his *favor* and *protection*. Thus may we hope the *joyful* day will ſoon come, when we ſhall ſee you a *happy woman*: but I am as well perſuaded this can *never* happen till you are a *virtuous one*, as I am that I ſhall *die*: nay, it ſeems to me *more certain*; for the world *may* come to an *end* before *my death*, but *never* can the *vicious* be *happy*, or the truly *virtuous* be *miſerable*.

Incloſed

Incloſed I ſend you a *Hymn*, proper to the *circumſtances* you are now in: I hope you will make the *ſenſe*, as well as the *words* of it your own. I alſo ſend you ſome *meditations* and *ſhort prayers*, which I recommend to you. Perhaps they may be of as great uſe hereafter, as at this time; and under a *better ſituation* than yours is at preſent; for *human nature is the ſame*, though all of us are not guilty *alike*, nor *criminal in the ſame ſins, in the ſame degree, and yet miſerable ſinners*. FAREWEL.

H Y M N.

1.

How lovely is this CALM RETREAT!
Where SIN *and* SORROW *ceaſe*;
Where mercy guides the wand'ring feet
To tread the ways of PEACE.

2.

Here let me reſt, no more employ,
My fatal ſnares to ſin;
Nor the VAIN DREAM OF GUILTY JOY
Betray my heart within.

3.

For what avails relief from SHAME,
From WANT *and* OUTWARD WOES,
If ſtill impell'd with SINFUL FLAME
The heart POLLUTED *glows?*

4.

4.

Short is the time that guilt can pleaſe,
But GREAT *the wretch's coſt;*
To ſhame, to want, and DIRE DISEASE
Betray'd, abandon'd, loſt.

5.

Riſe then, my ſoul! the hours review,
When aw'd by GUILT *and fear*
Thou durſt not HEAV'N *for mercy ſue,*
Nor hope for pity HERE.

6.

Dry'd are thy tears, thy GRIEFS *are fled*
Diſpell'd each BITTER *care;*
See! heav'n itſelf has lent its aid
To raiſe thee from DESPAIR.

7.

Hear then, O GOD! *thy work fullfil!*
And from thy MERCY'S *throne;*
Vouchſafe me ſtrength to do THY WILL
And to reſiſt MY OWN.

8.

So ſhall my ſoul each pow'r employ
Thy MERCIES *to adore,*
Whilſt heav'n itſelf proclaims with joy
One PARDON'D *ſinner more!*

DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS ON REPENTANCE AND PARDON OF SIN.

1.

To embrace the opportunity of repentance.

O *Lord God of mercy!* who in thine infinite goodneſs haſt given me an opportunity to *collect* my thoughts, and *ſee* the *dangers* that ſurround me; with ſhame and confuſion of face I acknowledge my *faults*, whilſt my *ſins* ſtand in *array* before me. How had I *wandered* from *thy* paths, *O Lord! Caſt me not away from thy preſence, nor take thy holy Spirit from me!* O'erwhelmed with conſcious guilt, I fly to thee for mercy, O *forgive* my *preſumptuous ſins*, and pardon my *foul offences!* Soften my relenting heart, and *reſtore my innocency!* I now look back with horror on the dreadful *precipice*, from whoſe ſummit my feet were ſlipping, and my ſoul on the brink of perdition! How deeply was I plunged in *iniquity:* and how *wonderfully* haſt thou delivered me! Give me, *O Lord*, a true ſenſe of *my condition*, and let floods of *penitential tears* flow from my eyes, and cleanſe my heart from guilt! Help me, *O Lord*, for *thy mercy's ſake!* Help me with thy *grace*, O HEAVENLY FATHER, for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake!

2.

For the ſame.

O ALMIGHTY FATHER, and great deliverer! Behold a miſerable offender ſtanding before thee, a monument of thy mercy. *To thee will I confeſs my ſins, for thou art my God!* Thou who haſt graciouſly afforded me this *ſolemn call* to repentance; *O let it find way to my heart!* Teach me to caſt mine eyes *within*, and *examine* my *conſcience*, that I may contemplate the *ſtate of my ſoul*, and meditate *on the life to come!* Preſent *Eternity* to my view, O Lord, in all its *dreadful*, all its *pleaſing* forms; and let me *behold the things which belong to my peace, before they are hid from mine eyes for ever!* Teach me to conſider my *preſent life* as a *ſtate of probation*, and to regerd it as a *real paſſage* to *another Being*.

Thus defended from the deſtructive influence of *bad examples*, let me ſeek acquaintance with my *own heart*, and *court* the healing *chaſtiſements* of thy *merciful hand*. — Let the ſufferings of my *bleſſed Saviour*, and the rebellious ſins of men, which occaſioned his *agonizing pains*, be the ſubject of my *daily thoughts*; and let *his meritorious death* atone for my offences!

3.

For the ſame.

O LORD GOD, to whom it belongeth to puniſh *ſinners*, and to *reward* thoſe who *diligently* ſeek thee; look down with an eye of *pity* and *compaſſion* on a *miſerable offender!* Thou

Thou art graciouſly pleaſed to afford me a *trial* of my conſtancy; O ſend me *thy help* to diſcharge my duty with inflexible integrity. Let *patience* and *reſignation*, *humility* and *contentment* reign triumphant in my heart! Let every day add *ſtrength* to my *faith* and *firmneſs* to my *reſolution*, that I may *delight* in offering up my *prayers*, and in ſhewing forth the *ſincerity* of my *repentance!* O aſſiſt me in the great work which I have undertaken, nor let me *dare* to think that any careleſs acknowledgement of my ſins, will be accepted by thee!

4.

For Truſt in God.

O GOD MOST HIGH, *O holy and merciful Lord*, ſuffer me not, I beſeech thee, to return into the *paths* of *perdition! Remind* me of thy mercies paſt, and let me not forget thy loving kindneſs and favor! Remind me of the *temporal miſeries* from which I have eſcaped, and the *eternal puniſhments* which wait on *impenitent ſinners*; that however thy providence may diſpoſe of me, I may labor with my hands for comfort and ſupport, and *die with hunger*, if ſuch *thy* pleaſure ſhould be, rather than *rebel againſt thy* holy laws! I will truſt in thee, *O merciful Father*, for an happy iſſue to all my troubles and diſtreſſes. *Where* will be my *hope* if thou hideſt thy face from me? *Where* will be my *truſt* if I forſake thy love? Let *faith*, and *hope*, and *charity*, and *peace* reign in my heart, *O Lord*, and raiſe my ſoul to *heaven*; that I may ſhew forth thy *praiſe*, and *the ends of the earth adore thy holy name!*

Grant

Grant this my *humble* petition, *O God* of heaven, through the *mediation* of my *crucified Lord and Redeemer!*

5.

For Forgiveneſs.

O LORD GOD, who beholdeſt all the *ſecret ſprings of human actions*, and the *evils* to which mankind are expoſed; have mercy upon me a *wretched ſinner*, wandering and loſt to every thought of thee. Reſtore me, O Lord, to a true ſenſe of my *guilt* and *folly*; and let my *tears* flow for my *diſobedience* to thy righteous laws! Forgive the offences of which my conſcience is afraid, and give me grace to amend my wicked life!

6.

For the ſame.

Rebuke me, *O Lord*, but not in thine *anger*; chaſten me, but not in thy *heavy diſpleaſure*. Turn thee, in thy wonted favor, and deliver me for thy mercies ſake! Waſh me thoroughly from my ſins, and cleanſe me from mine iniquities. Forget me not, I beſeech thee, in that hour, when I ſhall render up my ſoul. Let the never-failing merits of the Saviour of the world plead for me at thy throne, *O Lord of life*, that finally I may riſe to *life immortal!*

7.

For Newneſs of Life.

O eternal God, in whoſe hands are the iſſues of *life* and *death*, I beſeech thee awaken my heart to a true ſenſe of my

my condition, and arm me with reſolution to reſiſt *temptations*. Suffer not any earthly joy to *enchant* my ſoul, or *ſoothe* it into perdition. Thou knoweſt my inmoſt thoughts, and all the anxious wiſhes of my heart are open to thy view! To thee, O Lord, I fly for ſuccor; heal my *wounded heart*, and reſtore it to perfect health, for the ſake of the great Phyſician of ſouls, thy *eternal Son!*

8.

For Pardon of Sins.

ALMIGHTY GOD! *Maker of all things, judge of all men!—Thou ſovereign Lord of heaven and earth, on whom all Beings depend; who art ever ready to receive thy creatures who fly to thee for ſuccor*; be not extreme to mark *my offences!* Let tears of repentance flow from my offending eyes, and my heart bleed with contrition at the remembrance of my tranſgreſſions! Thou, O BLESSED LORD, who didſt ſuffer a *painful* and *ignominious* death, that I might obtain *pardon* of my ſins: Thou that madeſt an all-ſufficient ſacrifice for the ſins of the whole world, let not thy blood be ſpilt in vain for me!

9.

For the ſame.

O LORD GOD, to whom *vengeance* belongeth; thou to whom *vengeance* belongeth, let not thy *wrath* be armed againſt me! Look down with thy wonted goodneſs and compaſſion on a *frail* and *ſinful* creature! From the glories of thy *mercy-ſeat* extend thy pity, and *deliver* me from

from the cruel *bondage of ſin*: O Lord, I beſeech thee, give me that *perfect liberty* which can be only found in a *free obedience* to thy laws. *Try* me, O Lord, and ſeek the *ground* of my heart; *prove* me and examine my thoughts, and mortify *my ſinful vanities* to that degree, that even *ſhame* and *contempt* for *thy ſake*, may be, not only *acceptable*, but *welcome* to me!

10.

For the ſame.

O LORD ALMIGHTY, look down, I beſeech thee, in *pity* and *compaſſion* upon thy afflicted ſervant. My ſoul is troubled! O let not the remembrance of my *former* iniquities, preſs too ſorely on me. Give me *comfort* and *hope* in thy *holy word*, and ſo right an underſtanding of thy *threats* and *promiſes*, that I may never *diſtruſt* thy *mercies!* Break not the *bruiſed reed*, O LORD, nor ſhut up thy *tender mercies in diſpleaſure*, but let me hear of *joy* and *gladneſs*: Shew me the *brightneſs* of thy countenance, and give me *thy peace for ever!*

11.

For the ſame.

O LORD, rebuke me not in thine indignation, neither chaſten me in thy diſpleaſure. *Have mercy* upon me for I am *weak*: *heal* me, for my *heart* is vexed. Turn thee and deliver my ſoul: O *ſave me* for thy mercies ſake. For *in death* no man can remember thee; and who can give thee thanks in the grave! Suffer me not to work

vanity: but hear the voice of my weeping, and let my humble petition come before thee!

12.

For the ſame.

Unto thee, O LORD, do I *lift up my ſoul!* O MY GOD, I put my truſt in thee! Shew me thy *ways*, and teach me thy *paths*. Lead me forth in thy *truth*, for thou art *the God of my ſalvation*, and in thee is my *hope*. O *remember* not the ſins and offences of *my youth:* but *according to thy tender mercies*, which have been ever of old, think thou upon me, *O Lord*. Thou who guideſt the *meek* in judgment, O *teach* me thy way! All *thy paths*, O LORD, are *mercy* and *truth*, unto ſuch as *obey* thy laws! For thy name ſake, *O Lord*, be merciful unto MY SIN, *for it is great*. — Turn thee unto me, and have mercy upon me, for *without thee* I muſt be ever *deſolate and in miſery*. Look upon my *adverſity*, and forgive my ſins.

13.

For the ſame.

O merciful Lord God of heaven, deliver my ſoul, and let me not be brought to confuſion! Let *perfection* and *righteous dealing* ever wait upon me, that my *hope* may ſecurely *reſt* in thee. Thou knoweſt all my *deſire*, and *my longings* are not hid from thee! Forſake me not, then, *O Lord*, and be not far from me, *O God*, of my ſalvation!

Turn

Turn thy face from my ſins, and put out all my *miſdeeds!* Make me a *clean heart*, and *renew a right ſpirit within me.* O caſt me not away from thy *preſence*, but give me the *comfort of thy help*, and ſtabliſh me with thy *holy ſpirit!* Let not thine ears be ſhut to the voice of my complaint! If thou wert *extreme* to mark all that is done *amiſs*, what hopes could I cheriſh, or who could abide thy diſpleaſure! But there is *mercy* with thee, *therefore* ſhalt thou be *adored* and *feared!* My soul *looketh* for thee, *O Lord*, and in thy *word* is my truſt. Tho' the ſorrows of death ſhould compaſs me around, and the overflowings of ungodlineſs ſhould make me afraid, yet thine ears will be open to the complaint of thoſe who ſeek thee with a *contrite* heart. As my *ſins* cry aloud againſt me, let my prayers aſcend with a *ſweet ſavor* to thy mercy's ſeat, and obtain for me that forgiveneſs, without which I muſt periſh everlaſtingly!

14.

For the ſame.

O Lord God eternal, who in compaſſion to *ſinful man* didſt ſend thine only Son to die upon the croſs; ſpare me, *O Lord*, whom thou haſt *redeemed*, and be not *angry* with me for ever! I have ſwallowed iniquity with *greedineſs*, and delighted in *miſery:* but I look back with a weeping heart on theſe my offences. O give me power to *ſubdue* the irregular ſallies of my *deluded imagination*, and ſtrength to act as becometh a *true and conſtant believer in Jeſus Chriſt.*

15.

Againſt Deſpondency.

O LORD ALMIGHTY, at whoſe bow the mountains ſhake, and the earth trembleth from her foundations: thy *mercies* are as boundleſs as thy *power!* Hear my voice, *O Lord*, and liſten to the *words of my complaint*; for I am ſmitten with *anguiſh* of ſoul, and the *powers of darkneſs* ſurround me. But thou canſt diſpel the *mighty griefs*, and calm the ſorrows of my heart: O ſtop the *current* of my woe, and ſuffer me not to *diſtruſt* thy mercy. Relieve my diſtracted thoughts, and cheer my *mournful* ſpirit! Though my ſoul is polluted with *ſin*, thou canſt *waſh it clean! Vile* as I am, what can my *longing wiſhes* mean, or what theſe *anxious throbbings of my heart*, if I am not *ſincere*. Thou ſeeſt the *humiliation* of my ſoul, which no *powers of language* can deſcribe! O let the *rays of thy unutterable goodneſs* ſhine on my *trembling heart*; and *that precious blood* which fell from the croſs of *Chriſt*, heal my *diſtempered* mind!

ON

ON REPENTANCE.

1.

On Repentance, with regard to Confeſſion of Sins.

O *Almighty God*, I have *offended* againſt thy *holy laws!* I have followed the *fooliſh devices*, and irrational deſires of my corrupted heart, leaving *undone* thoſe things which I ought *to do*; and *doing* thoſe things which ought *not to be done!* I have not attended to thy *word*, nor ſo reſiſted *temptations to ſin*, as to acquit myſelf at the tribunal of my *own conſcience:* how ſhall I ſtand at thy *judgment-ſeat!* yet ſpare me, *O Lord*, for thy *mercies ſake*, and be not *angry* with me for ever! Wipe out my offences from the *book of remembrance*, for the ſake of my *bleſſed Mediator and Redeemer* JESUS CHRIST. AMEN!

2.

On Repentance (for the uſe of a Family or Company.)

O LORD OMNIPOTENT, we beſeech thee to deliver us from all the ſins which we have committed *againſt* thee. Awaken thoſe who have not yet a due ſenſe of their *guilt*, and complete a *penitential* ſorrow where it is *begun*. — Renew in us whatever is loſt or decayed by our *evil habits*, and reſtore to us an *upright mind*; that the wiles of *Satan* may not prevail againſt us. As we have thus

eſcaped, by thy *wonderful* Providence, from the *pollutions* of the world, preſerve us, *O Lord*, from being again *entangled* therein. Keep us in a ſtate of conſtant *watchfulneſs* and *humility*, that *meekneſs* and *hope* may reign triumphant in our hearts, and ſecure our *conſtancy!* This, O LORD, we beg for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake! *Amen.*

3.

On the ſame.

O Lord of life, and God of mercy, in whom whoſoever truſteth will not periſh for ever: give us a *ſerious temper of mind*, that we may collect our *wandering thoughts*, and regulate our undiſciplined affections. Teach us to behold the wonders of thy mercies, in our deliverance. Extend thy goodneſs, that we may diſcern the *joys* of thy *peace*, and the *comforts* of thy *mercy*. Defend us, we beſeech thee, that we may never return into the paths of ſin and *miſery*. Give us a due ſenſe of the *uncertainty of life*, and an awful remembrance of the *dreadful doom* that waiteth on thoſe who die *impenitent:* that with *contrite hearts* we may truly lament our ſins, and through thy mercies obtain forgiveneſs, for the ſake of JESUS CHRIST, *our bleſſed Lord and Saviour.* Amen!

Sin-

Sincerity, Induſtry, Fortitude and Perſeverance eſſential to Religion.

LETTER XVI.

To the ſame.

IF the *eyes* of the ALMIGHTY are a thouſand times brighter than the ſun, and ſee our inmoſt thoughts, all kinds of deceit, are folly inthe ſuperlative degree! And what foul *ingratitude it is to God* and *men*, to attempt to *deceive* thoſe who are the inſtruments of his mercies to us! —If the *all-ſeeing eye of heaven* CAN *penetrate* through all diſguizes, would you wiſh that the *eyes of your companions* or friends ſhould be *very partial* to your *faults?* Might not this incline you to leave thoſe faults uncorrected?

I muſt now, moſt ſeriouſly recommend to you to read thoſe divine leſſons, which the great *friend* and *prophet*, the *Saviour* and *Redeemer* of the world, has left as an *invaluable legacy* to thoſe who are his true *friends* and *ſervants*. Contemplate *often* the *perſuaſive eloquence* with which he invites you to accept of *mercy:* and forget not what the *conditions* of that mercy are. In the mean while be aſſured, that *true religion* and *uſeful induſtry* mutually aſſiſt each other: the *hands*, as well as the *heart*, muſt have entertainment: we cannot be *always* on our knees; but we do a great part of our *duty to God*, when we do *our duty to our neighbor*; and you may be ſatisfied, that *religion* is the *foundation* on which all human happineſs is built.

Do you think that a *temporary inclination to goodneſs* will, by any kind of *magic*, make you *good?* We muſt recur to the *precepts* of chriſtianity, or we cannot expect to command our *paſſions* or *appetites*, nor conſequently to enjoy the *happineſs* of virtue, *here*, or the *reward* of it *hereafter*. Remember there is *nothing leſs than your ſoul at ſtake*. *Eternity*, to which millions of ages are but as a *moment*, waits your arrival on the other ſide the grave! You have lived in a ſtate of ſin againſt GOD: apply with the more diligence to *learn*, and with the more attention to *practiſe*, the duties of a *chriſtian:* there is the utmoſt reaſon to believe *all will be well again*. You will ſoon find that the *precepts of chriſtianity* ſoften the *hardſhips of life*, and render it *eaſy* and *pleaſant:* they will give you *reſolution* and *fortitude*, and enable you at once to triumph over the *deluding blandiſhments of forbidden pleaſures*, though offered by the hand of *plenty*; and to *conquer* the *temptations* which ariſe from *poverty*. They will ſecure you from *preſent miſery*, as well as *future puniſhment*; and could you acquire a ſupport, ever ſo *pleaſing* upon *other principles*, would it be poſſible for you to live in *comfort*, being ſubject to *ſickneſs*, *pain*, and *death*, whilſt you dared not even to bow your *knee*, or caſt up your eyes to heaven for mercy?

Philoſophers of antient times, who had obſcure hints concerning the *true God*, taught many *pleaſing*, and many *pompous* leſſons, to arm mankind againſt the *evils of life:* but *pleaſing* as they were, it has been well obſerved, that thoſe

leſſons ſeldom did more than ſubdue *evils paſt*, and *evils to come*, but *evils preſent* generally ſubdued them.—Such is not the caſe of *chriſtianity*: we are told from the mouth of the *Son of God himſelf*, that *his precepts* will exalt us, from the *depths* of diſtreſs to the *heights* of happineſs. He ſays, "*Come unto me all ye that travel, and are heavy laden, and I will give you reſt!*" And experience has conſtantly proved, that the *chriſtian* religion affords *relief*, and even *joy*, under *every* calamity which the heart can *ſuffer*, or *conceive*.

If your vices have not deprived you, of all ſenſe of *good* and *evil*; if you are not loſt to *reaſon*, as your preſent conduct implies you are not; prove it, by thinking *attentively* on theſe things, every day of your life. *To make a thorough change of manners is not the work of a day.* Religion is a *ſcience*, but thanks to the *Almighty*, who ſent *his Son to teach us his will*, it is a *ſcience* which we may ſoon learn, if we ſet heartily about it: and what is there of *any value* which is learnt without *attention?*

We are all of us *frail* and *ſinful* creatures, and the beſt are ſubject to *err*. Such is the *imperfection* of our nature, that a great part of the *hiſtory of human life*, conſiſts in a detail of *ſins* and *ſorrow*, *infirmities*, and *repentance*. But as it is appointed for us to *chuſe* GOOD or EVIL; HEAVEN and HELL depend much on ourſelves: and *reaſon* and *common ſenſe* tell us, that the more *conſcious* we are of *infirmities*, the more *diligently* we ought to *watch*, and keep *ſtrictly* on our guard, to reſiſt the *approaches* of *ſin*. In the mean while it is no leſs obvious, to every one who

really

really believes in the moſt ſublime and holy religion of Chriſt, the Saviour of the world, that it is *far better* to ſuffer any *temporal evil*, even *death* itſelf, than preſumptuouſly to offend, and with eyes open, to ruſh into *wickedneſs*. All *preſumptuous ſins*, properly ſo called, *that is*, great offences *againſt God*, known to be ſuch, are not only ſo many proofs of *rebellion* againſt him, but every commiſſion of them, from the very *nature of ſin*, eſtranges us the more from him: and can *you* believe that an *open defiance* of heaven will paſs *unpuniſhed*? *Chriſtians* who live at *enmity* with their Maker, are, with reſpect to the moral world, what *monſters* are in the natural world. And how can that be deemed leſs than *enmity*, when we believe a thing to be ſinful, and yet give ourſelves up to practiſe it? If *love* and *obedience* are the beſt proofs of *friendſhip*; *contempt* and *diſobedience* are no leſs certain tokens of *enmity*.

To ſacrifice all for the *fleeting* pleaſures of the day, perhaps the *jollity* of an hour, and for a precarious ſupply for the *body*, to plunge the ſoul into *everlaſting miſery*! How it upbraids with *folly*! The thought *recoils* upon the *heart*; whilſt the ſoul *ſhudders* at the dreadful proſpect which lies before her!—Have *patience*, 'tis but for a day, perhaps *but a day* in the *literal ſenſe*; *long* it cannot be: let the *temptation* preſs ever ſo hard, we are ſure, if we reſiſt it, we ſhall receive an *immediate* reward in a *peaceful mind*, whilſt the *glories* of *immortality* are ſuſpended only whilſt we live *here*; and even *this life* on theſe terms will be crowned with *victory* and *triumph*.

Every

Every region contains *ſinners enough of both ſexes*, and *chriſtian* countries, *alas*, abound with proofs, how ill the precepts of chriſtianity are obeyed! But *true* as it is, it amounts to *nothing* in our favor. If *man* is not like the *beaſt* that periſhes; if we are to be judged for *all our thoughts and actions*, what can we *expect* will be the iſſue of our trial, if we live in a *promiſcuous commerce*, differing from beaſts, only by tranſgreſſing the bounds which the *God of nature* has fixed for the government, even of the *brute creation?*

You have now time to give theſe *momentous* conſiderations their due weight. Avoid every thing that can *diſturb* your mind: learn *diligently*, and practiſe *faithfully*, thoſe virtues which the laws of Chriſt have ſo *ſtrongly* enjoined, and ſo *clearly* pointed out. Conſider him as your *great Lawgiver*, *your Redeemer*, and *your Judge!* Conſider him as your *friend* too; he *died* for you, and therefore muſt be ſo, if you comply with the *conditions* of his friendſhip. *Reaſon* and *faith* concur in this belief: it is declared in ſuch terms, that if the *Almighty Father* were to look down from the battlements of heaven, and ſpeak in *thunder* to the *affrighted world*, it could not well be more *obvious* than it is. If we judge from what we ſee of the *abandoned*, *impenitent* part of mankind, the impreſſion would not remain long on their minds, were this really to happen; for as our *Saviour*, on occaſion of the ſame kind of enquiry, ſaid, "*If they believe not Moſes and the Prophets, neither will they be perſuaded, though one roſe from the dead.*"

Exert

Exert yourſelf; entertain no *fond* notions of *eaſe*, but apply *diligently* to the *great buſineſs of your ſalvation* *. If we amuſe ourſelves, and *trifle* away life, there is no *repentance* in the grave: thoſe muſt be *ſtupid* indeed, who do not ſee, that we were made for *great* and *noble* ends, and that the ſoul of *man*, is not of a *nature* to admit of *idleneſs*. We muſt be *happy*, or we muſt be *miſerable after death*; and death is approaching very faſt. If this is *obvious to every child*, is it not *madneſs* to delay a moment? Let me entreat you, by all the *ties of humanity*; by all the *motives of love for God*; by all the *pleaſures* you hope to *enjoy*, and by all the *pains* you are *afraid* to *ſuffer*, in that future ſtate to which we muſt ſoon be *changed*, to think *ſeriouſly* of theſe matters. Think of them continually, as the *incidents* of life occur, even from the *dawn of day* till the *midnight darkneſs*, when ſleep cloſes your eyes: and remember that

"*To ſuppliant virtue nothing is deny'd* ———
"*For bleſſings ever wait on virtuous deeds,*
"*And though a late, a ſure reward ſucceeds.*"

And *be* aſſured, that there is *infinite happineſs* in ſtore for you. You will find, every day, that *virtue* will expand your views, and *that* which before looked *ſad* and *dreary*, will change its *appearances*: you will learn how to convert *every* incident to your *own advantage*, and make a *virtue* of *every neceſſity* †. FAREWEL.

General

* See courage and conſtancy, vol. I. page 121.
† See happineſs, vol. I. pages 98, to 114.

General Thoughts on Religion.

LETTER XVII.

To ——.

I Am not ſurprized that *you* ſhould ſeem to be *confuſed* in your *ideas* with regard to *religion* * : it is a common evil. We have all our *particular turns of thought*, and our *particular manner of expreſſing* them; but few are qualified to give any accurate account of *their own notions*. The reaſon of this is *obvious*, for few of us ever make *religion* a ſubject of *diſcourſe*; nor do even the *thinking* part of mankind read the *ſcriptures* ſo *often*, or ſo *attentively* as we all ought to do: in the mean while, many are much more *ingenious* to confound themſelves with the *theory*, than diligent to diſcover what their *own practice is*, *and what it ought to be*.

As to PIETY, *pure*, *fervent*, *humble*, *cheerful*, *and reſigned*, it is a *rich jewel*, which cannot be found without *labor*; but a plain *good underſtanding* bids as fair for it, as the moſt diſtinguiſhed talents: a *good heart* is the thing moſt neceſſary, ſince *without this* there can be no ſolidity in our religion; and *with it* we may humbly hope that great allowances will be made for our *infirmities*. A *ſinleſs obedience* is not the lot of mortals, at leaſt not of ſuch mortals

* Religion in general, Vol. I. page 75.

mortals as we are; but to *run the race* that is ſet before us; to exert our ſtrength, and when we fall, to riſe by *grace*, and to be *pardoned* by *mercy*, ſeems to be the higheſt object, that in the general courſe of things, human nature can arrive at.

It was the ſaying of a great man, "that the leaſt propenſity to *devotion*, is preferable to all that is poſſible for man to know;" and indeed it ſeems as natural to us, to be *devout*, as it is to *breathe*; ſince to feel that we *live*, and not to conſider the *Lord of life*, is contrary to *reaſon*, and all the common notions we entertain of gratitude, juſtice, and equity.

"*Look round how Providence beſtows alike*
"*Sunſhine and rain to bleſs the fruitful year*
"*On diff'rent nations, all of diff'rent faiths:*
"*And (tho' by ſeveral names and titles worſhip'd)*
"*Heav'n takes the various tribute of their praiſe,*
"*Since all agree to own, at leaſt to mean,*
"*One beſt, one greateſt, only Lord of all.*"

But, alas! the *great duty of conſideration* is moſt *grievouſly* neglected: hence it ariſes that there is generally ſo *little gratitude*, and ſo much *infidelity* towards God; and infidelity is the grand ſpring of *immorality*. The more our *reaſon* is cultivated, one would imagine the more we ſhould be inclined to *think*: and that the more we think, *within meaſure*, the more naturally we ſhould be led to diſtinguiſh ourſelves from *brutes*. But we ſee in ſome

uncivilized

uncivilized countries, how *ſavage* mankind are; and among the moſt *civilized*, that *learning*, as generally underſtood, and *piety*, are two very diſtinct things. Were it not for the contrivances of human laws, to *enforce obedience to the divine command*, and keep men in ſubjection, from the double motive of the *fear* of *temporal puniſhments*, as well as the *dread of everlaſting miſery*; the *hope* of bliſs eternal would be very ineffectual to keep the world in awe.

If ſuch is the ſtate of mankind, we ought to be the more diſtruſtful of ourſelves; and when we ſtand, to take the more heed leſt we fall. As to FAITH, *virtuous minds* are eaſily ſatisfied; theſe have a natural propenſity to believe what correſponds with their diſpoſition: but it is very hard, if not *impoſſible*, to remove all *doubtfulneſs* from *vicious minds*: for ſuppoſing they had *ſeen* with their eyes the *miracles* recorded in the *New Teſtament*; yet after the *firſt impreſſion*, ſuch *vicious perſons*, *acknowledging the facts*, would raiſe doubts about the *conſequences*; and at length be *ingenious* enough to *deceive themſelves* into a perſuaſion, that they might gratify their *inclinations* to *vice*, and yet paſs with *impunity*. For the queſtion about *faith*, is not as to the *degree of evidence*, whether we might not have *more* than we have; but whether there is not *abundantly ſufficient* for thoſe who *ſincerely wiſh to obey God*.

Nor does the difficulty ariſe from any *weakneſs in reaſon* concerning a *firſt cauſe*, for the moſt ſtupid and inſenſible *ſee* and *confeſs* it: but neither this faith, nor yet as ſtrong a perſuaſion that *Jeſus Chriſt* appeared on earth,

veſted with authority from heaven, to teach mankind the *will of God*, *can be ſufficient*, without accommodating our *wills* and *inclinations* to the divine command. When we *obey God*, we may be ſaid to have ſuch a *faith* in him, as we muſt hope will engage *his aſſiſtance* and *favor*; or in other words, that *ſuch a meaſure of his grace* will operate on our minds, by means of that very *will* and *inclination* to virtue, as we may ſafely pronounce to be the thing moſt deſirable to human nature; and productive of the greateſt and moſt *permanent good* which it is capable of. But it ought to be remembered, that this habit of mind is not to be acquired without pains; *will* and *inclination* often leading us by a ſtrong propenſity to objects of *ſenſe*, to the *luſt of the fleſh*, and the *pride of life*. Thus we are *diverted* from the purſuit of our greateſt *good*: but the prize for which we contend, is of ſuch *infinite value*, and the *loſs* ſo *horrible*, reaſon ſteps in to aſſure us that nothing leſs than a degree of *madneſs*, can excuſe our *indolence* or *cowardice*.

It is obſerved further, that all *civilized nations* nearly agree, with regard to the *duties of morality*, though they differ in *faith*: but there is no morality ſo *ſublime* *, nor any ſo well adapted to the ſtate of mankind, as that of the chriſtian †. The opinion that the religion of Chriſt forbids *innocent* pleaſures; that it deſtroys our *true freedom*, or abridges the *true liberty* of mankind, is juſt as fallacious as that *vice* carries with it more *pleaſure* than *virtue*;

* Charity, Vol. I. page 92. † Character of a chriſtian, Vol. I. page 94.

virtue; ſo far from a *natural propenſity* to joy being forbidden by *chriſtianity*, there neither *is*, nor do I conceive there *can be*, any ſyſtem of religion which leads to it ſo familiarly, by the mere force of that *love* and *kindneſs*, which is recommended by it. What the poet ſays of the SELF-LOVE of a *virtuous man*, is no leſs applicable to the *chriſtian*, with reſpect to the influence which his religion has on his mind.

" *Friends, parents, neighbors firſt, it will embrace*
" *Our country next, and next all human race.*
" *Wide and ſtill wide the o'erflowings of his mind,*
" *Take every creature in, of every kind:*
" *Earth ſmiles around with boundleſs bounty bleſt,*
" *And heaven beholds its image in his breaſt!*"

So far from *joy* being forbidden, nothing can be ſo detrimental to the execution of our *duty* as CHRISTIANS, as a *melancholy* caſt of thought, except *that perverſeneſs of heart* which leads us to fly in the face of heaven. At the ſame time it may be obſerved, that this *love* and *kindneſs*, this *chriſtian charity*, or *morality*, can no more ſtand without *chriſtian faith*, than *any faith* can ſtand an examination, if it undermines *morality*.

With reſpect to the *motives* to human actions, there can be none ſo high as thoſe which are derived from *religion*; for none promiſe any reward comparable to it; and whatever may be pretended by ſome, *who fancy themſelves* to be *angels*, you may be aſſured there is *greater*

glory in doing a *noble* action, to a *noble end*, with regard to *ourſelves*, and *ſociety*, than if the *ſociety* only was benefited. The poet, ſpeaking of virtue, ſays,

" *Above the worthleſs trophies men can raiſe*
" *She ſeeks not honors, wealth, nor airy praiſe,*
" *But with herſelf, herſelf the goddeſs pays.*"

And it is *true*, that *virtue* carries with her *part of the reward* which ſhe promiſes; ſhe carries with her *hope* and *joy*, and the *ſweet peace* which dwells in her boſom; but the rewards of *good actions* by no means terminate in the pleaſure of doing them, or in the reflection that follows: this *pleaſure* indeed, is *great* and *permanent*, but it is only a *prelude* to a *higher joy*; for I think no action can be *complete in all its parts*, if the happineſs of the *actor* is not concerned in it, with regard to *eternity*, as well as *time*.

" *Our life is ſhort, but to extend that ſpan*
" *To vaſt eternity is virtue's work!*"

Religion *moderates* and *reſtrains*, but by no means baniſhes *gladneſs* from our hearts. It forbids *ſome pleaſures*, but it gives *others more laſting in their room*. A very ingenious author has remarked, that " The con-
" templation of the *divine Being*, and the *exerciſe of vir-*
" *tue*, are, in their own nature, ſo far from excluding all
" *gladneſs of heart*, that they are perpetual *ſources* of it.
" The *true ſpirit* of religion *cheers*, as well as *compoſes*
" the

" the ſoul: it baniſhes indeed all *levity* of behavior, all " *vicious* and *diſſolute mirth*, but in exchange, fills the " mind with a *perpetual ſerenity*, *uninterrupted cheerful-* " *neſs*, and an habitual inclination to *pleaſe others*, as well " as to be *pleaſed in itſelf*."

Notwithſtanding this, it is no paradox, that the *houſe of mourning* is better than the *houſe of feaſting*. It is evident from the reaſon of things, and the experience of mankind, that as death is abſolutely certain, and that we ought as certainly to keep our ſpirits in a proper ſtate and preparation for our *diſſolution*; it is far more eligible to die in ſuch a *habit of mind*, as this kind of mourning implies, than with ſuch *looſe*, *ſcattered*, or *voluptuous thoughts*, as are the ordinary attendants on ſuch pleaſurable ſcenes as we generally underſtand by the *houſe of feaſting*. It may be obſerved alſo, that Providence has ſo ordered things, with regard to this world, that *pleaſure* loſes its name when we are glutted with it: and as mourning becomes criminal, when it *does not* bend the mind to obedience to the will of heaven, ſo when it *does*, this very *mourning* is converted into *joy*.

In this general view we may conclude, that there is a *certain mediocrity*, in which human virtue chiefly conſiſts. We muſt not be overcome by ſorrow, nor by joy; our ſpirits ſhould be equal; remembering that the joy which ariſes from a well-grounded *hope* of being acceptable in the ſight of God, is ſo ſolid and permanent, that all others dwindle and expire before it; and in this ſenſe the *chriſtian* religion is peculiarly fraught *with joy*.

The ſum and ſubſtance of the *religion of Chriſt* is comprehended in three words, FAITH, HOPE and CHARITY *. It conſiſts in *faith*, or a belief in ONE GOD the *ſupreme Almighty Lord and Father of all, who is ſelf-exiſting in abſolute perfection; infinite in power and wiſdom, juſtice and mercy: And in* JESUS CHRIST, *the expreſs image of the Father, who was ſent upon earth as our* SOVEREIGN, *our* TEACHER, *our* LAWGIVER, *our* REDEEMER, *and is appointed to be our* JUDGE: *And in the* HOLY GHOST THE COMFORTER, *as the* SPIRIT *proceeding from* GOD, *by whom aſſiſtance or* GRACE *is afforded to men, due ſupplication being made for it, in order to diſcharge our duty, agreeably to what has been taught us by our* DIVINE LAWGIVER *and Saviour.*

The nature of our *compoſition* is confeſſedly *incomprehenſible* to us. We carry about us a *monument of wonder* in the frame of our bodies; how much more ought we to entertain the moſt *awful* regard to ourſelves, as an amazing proof of the *divine workmanſhip*, in the conſtitution of our *ſouls!* As we underſtand ſo little of this connection; it is moſt wonderful that man ſhould ever attempt to comprehend the *nature of God!* This however we know, that GOD is *adorable*, and that we *muſt adore*, and *obey* him too. This is enough for us to know in our *preſent ſtate*. It is therefore evident, that HE has not endowed us with a capacity to comprehend the *Trinity in Unity*.

When our *Saviour* aſked the man, who ſolicited mercy in behalf of his *child*, "*Doſt thou believe?*" The anſwer

* *Faith*, Vol. I. pag. 85. *Hope*, p. 90. *Charity*, p. 92.

ſwer was, " *Lord, I believe, help thou my unbelief!* " or, in other words, aſſiſt me to *increaſe*, *confirm*, and *ſtrengthen* my belief, *that thou art the true Meſſiah!* and direct my *will and inclinations to their proper object*, which I am ſenſible is to *devote* my heart to *the ſupreme God*, who gave me my *Being*.

The religion of *Chriſt* alſo conſiſts in *hope*, as indeed all *religions* do; but this is no leſs than the *hope of happineſs eternal*, *founded on the merits of no leſs a perſon than the ſame* JESUS CHRIST, *the Son of the* LIVING GOD, *who viſited the earth as* A MAN, *and whoſe blood was ſhed as a* PROPITIATION *and atonement for the ſins of the* REPENTING WORLD.—As the conſideration of his *ſufferings* enables us to triumph over the *afflictions* to which we are ſubject; the awful reflexion of his *almighty power*, *humbles* the ſoul, and the *higheſt exaltations* of *earthly ſplendor* appear as *nothing* before *him*.

Our religion conſiſts alſo in *charity*, as the *reſult* of our belief, and as the *performance* of thoſe duties which are required of us by the ſame DIVINE LAWGIVER; *that is*, TO DO JUSTICE, TO SHOW MERCY, TO WALK HUMBLY BEFORE GOD; and as a conſequence of the whole, to keep ourſelves *unſpotted from the world*.

Now it ſeems to me impoſſible for *you*, or *me*, or *any one*, as a *rational creature*, to entertain this *faith*, or *hope*, or to practiſe this *charity*, and at the ſame time to *live in any known wickedneſs*. *Obedience* and *rebellion*, at the ſame time, are *abſolute contradictions*. You may with as much conſiſtency believe there is *no God*, or that *he did not make*

the world, though you *ſee* HIM in the *work of his hands*; or that *Jeſus Chriſt* was not ſent upon earth, though there is ſo very *clear* and *authentic an hiſtory of his life, and death*, ſupported by the evidence even of thoſe who were his *enemies*: you may likewiſe as well ſuppoſe there will be *no judgment after death*; as that the *guilty* will paſs *unpuniſhed*; or in other words, *that you may indulge a known ſin, and yet not be obnoxious to puniſhment* for it *hereafter*.

With reſpect to *charity*, which implies *good works*, you may alſo as well ſuppoſe a perſon to deſerve the name of *good*, who is very *pious* in the *morning*, and very *wicked* in the *afternoon*, as that this virtue can prevail as a ſacrifice during the continuance of a premeditated ſin: nor do I comprehend how the true *charity* of a *follower* of *Chriſt* can exiſt, without the true piety of a *chriſtian*.

When you conſider further, that what is denominated *ſin*, or a *breach of the divine law*, is clearly and expreſsly mentioned in the *New Teſtament*, by the ſame *divine lawgiver* himſelf, and alſo by his *authority*; there can be no doubt concerning *what is ſin*. The world itſelf, which, as I have juſt obſerved, is the object of our *ſenſes*, can hardly be more worthy of our *belief*, that it exiſts, than that every thing which is generally underſtood by *ſin*, is highly offenſive to God. This is obvious likewiſe from *conſcience*, or the *anxiety*, the *pain* and *diſtreſs* which the mind ſuffers, when we treſpaſs on the *divine laws*; and alſo by that conſcience informing us, that if *we do not repent, we ſhall be puniſhed hereafter*.

If

If it is not ſo, what can *conſcience* mean? was it given for no end? We may laugh at *conſcience*; ſo we may likewiſe laugh at *hunger*, but if we do not comply with the calls of it, we ſhall *die*: and we can no more reſiſt the calls of this appetite, and yet keep our *bodies alive*, than we can reſiſt the calls of *conſcience*, and keep our *ſouls from periſhing*. The only difference is, that the object of one is *preſent*, of the other at *ſome diſtance*, though it *may* reach us *every hour*.

Conſider alſo that death cloſes the *whole ſcene!*—there is no *repentance* in the grave! We are now under *probation*; what think you will be the *conſequence after death*, when we are judged according to that *law* which we are now *commanded* to walk in; and that *conſcience* which we are now *commanded* to obey, if we *do not walk* in the *one*, nor *obey* the *other?*

Faith, *hope*, and *charity* ſeem to depend on each other; and it is not poſſible to reject *either*, and be intitled to the *glorious rewards of chriſtianity*. Agreeably to this ſtate of the argument, with reſpect both to *ſpeculative* and *practical divinity*, as well as the condition of mankind, you find our church prays, "*Give unto us the increaſe of faith, hope and charity; and that we may obtain that which thou doſt promiſe, make us to love that which thou doſt command* *."

For the ſame reaſon it is obvious that every one, in his right mind, muſt ſee the neceſſity of *repentance*, not only as it is expreſſed by *ſorrow*, but alſo by *amendment of life*.

* Collect for the 14th ſunday after Trinity.

life. If you, for inſtance, who lately deſerved a harſh name, are notwithſtanding truly a *penitent*, your condition may be ſoon rendered as far more deſirable than that of the firſt and greateſt of mankind, who are *impenitent*, as eternity exceeds *time*, or the *higheſt happineſs*, the *greateſt miſery*. But remember the more *ſincere* you are, the more *charitable* you ought to be in your *opinions of others*.

We often act as if the *time to come* were not of the ſame nature as the *time paſt*; but whether it glides in *pleaſure*, or labors on in *pain*, it will ſoon be gone. But *eternity!*—" *Thou pleaſing dreadful thought!*" Who would forfeit thy joys for *millions of worlds!* Who would ſuffer thy *torments* for all thoſe worlds can give, were we exempt from *ſickneſs*, *poverty* and *pain*, the *pangs of ſorrow*, or the *ravages of time!* But being, *as we all are*, inheritors of ſo *many evils*, let us rejoice that our reaſon walks hand in hand as the *conſtant faithful friend and companion of faith*, and draws us, as it were by *links of adamant*, *conſtraining* us to fall down and *adore* the hand that gave it, reſigning our *wills* to him whence *all counſel and reflexion* ſpring!

Thus you may perceive, that ſo far from giving yourſelf up as *loſt*, HOPE is at once your duty, *your happineſs*, and *your remedy*: and if your heart is *ſincere*, you may build it on a *rock*, which is ſecured by the *arm of omnipotence*. *Hope* will ceaſe with enjoyment: *Faith* will be abſorbed in the fruition of bliſs: but *charity will endure for ever! The love of God and men* is the com-

pletion of all human happineſs, both here and hereafter; for though it may differ eſſentially in degree, the joys of heaven will probably conſiſt in it. But if we do not poſſeſs this charity, ſo as to receive *joy* and *comfort* in it *here*, is it to be preſumed that we *ſhall*, or that we *can*, in the nature of things, be *capable* of it *hereafter*, or conſequently that we *can be happy?* And if we are *not happy*, we muſt be *miſerable*, for this plain reaſon, that the ſoul is *immortal* and will not periſh.

Nor is *hope*, or *fear*, or *love* only concerned, in religion. *Gratitude* is one of the *ſtrongeſt affections of the ſoul*, eſpecially when it is expreſſed towards thoſe who, we are ſure, love us with the greateſt *ſincerity and truth*. How *vaſt* is the debt due to heaven, for the *goodneſs* expreſſed in the *redemption of the world by the death of Chriſt!* Who can *forget* it, or *remembering* withhold their *gratitude?*

" —— *From the table of my memory*
" *I'll wipe away all trivial fond records,*
" *All ſaws* * *of books, all forms, all preſſures paſt,*
" *That youth and obſervation copied there;*
" *And* THY COMMANDMENT *all alone ſhall live*
" *Within the book and volume of my brain,*
" *Unmix'd with baſer matter!* "

Yourſelf can beſt determine as to your own ſincerity. Our hearts are treacherous, and we cannot eaſily fathom the depths of

* Proverbs or ſentences.

of our own corruption; but there is a rule by which to paſs a judgment: if you court every thing that is GOOD, *which accident and your ſituation in life will admit of; and fly from every thing that is* EVIL, *or that leads to* EVIL, *which accident or your ſituation in life may expoſe you to, you may readily conclude that your ſincerity is acceptable in the ſight of God.*

Hope, when it is *ill grounded*, is generally called the *fool's paradiſe:* and with reſpect to the *preſent part of our exiſtence*, we often find that it is *vain* to imagine that even *conſcious innocence*, or the love of *God* and *men*, or the greateſt ſervices done to our fellow-creatures, will be always effectual to build our expectations upon, for *favor*, *kindneſs*, or even *juſtice* from the *world: but it is not ſo with* GOD; *he who knoweth all things, and judges uprightly, and certainly will reward our virtue.* As *hope* is thus interwoven with *charity*, and we cannot expect a reward *for nothing*, we muſt conſequently act agreeably to it.

" —— *If we have hope in heav'n's*
" *Joys, we muſt make* ſignal *of that hope!*"

No one can in reaſon expect, even the common ſupports of life, unleſs he ſpeaks his *wants*, and uſes his *reaſon* to obtain them; and the ſame reaſon tells us, that we muſt *implore* the mercies of heaven to relieve our *ſpiritual* wants, as well as our *temporal* ones, not by weak-minded or trifling prayers, or by a languid indifference in our *actions*, but with *cloſe attention*, and as if we *believed*, what

what we ſay *we believe*; at the ſame time practiſing that which we are commanded, becauſe we are commanded, as well as for its own *intrinſic worth*. Mere ſpeculative virtue is of no value. Unleſs you are reſolute and determined to ſeek the *truth*, and *mercies* of *God through Chriſt*, and to ſhun the *falſhood* and *malignity of ſin*, you can hardly entertain a *conſiſtent hope*.

To apply *theſe reflexions* to your own caſe, for heaven's ſake haſten to recover from that *lethargy of underſtanding*, and that *madneſs of heart*, under which you ſo lately labored. If you believe that your *ſoul is immortal*, cleanſe it by your *prayers*, and by a *virtuous* and *religious* life, from the *ſtains* it has contracted, and humbly hope to be *happy for ever!*

Here fix your *mark*: here keep your eye *attentive*, that you may not overſhoot the *haven of your reſt*. The more virtuous you are, the more acceptable you will be in the ſight of God. How often do we ſee the breaſt of the *great* and *noble* tortured even to diſtraction, when the humble cottager lives and dies *in comfort*. As with the health of the body, ſo it is with the ſoul: *Sleep* often

" *Flies the canopies of coſtly ſtate*
" *Tho' lull'd with ſounds of ſweeteſt melody,*
" —— *And leaves the kingly couch,*
" *Yet ſeals the* SHIP BOY'*s eyes, and rocks his brains*
" *In cradle of the rude imperious ſurge.*"

Such

Such is the *order of nature*, with regard to *man*, and the objects of ſenſe; and can we heſitate a moment in believing, that the *Great Author of nature* has the *ſame regard* to *man* with reſpect to the *moral world*; and will give *reſt everlaſting* to the *virtuous ſoul*, when landed in the regions on the other ſide the grave!

Happy ſhall I be, if you give theſe conſiderations their *due weight*, and enter into the *true ſpirit* of them, that I may be aſſiſtant in promoting your felicity, for I believe it will be an *unſpeakable* advantage to myſelf, if by this means I can be inſtrumental to your acceptance with God, when you ſhall be arraigned and appear before the throne of your tremendous judge; who with more than angelic ſweetneſs may pronounce this ſentence, "*Well done, thou good and faithful ſervant!*" — God preſerve you! *I am your very true friend.*

On prudential Conduct, Moderation, Reading and Industry.

LETTER XVIII.

To the ſame.

WHEN you conſider the nature of this charity, you muſt be ſenſible, that the more objects are relieved, the greater will be the *merit* of it. Thoſe who *are ſincere* ſhould loſe no time in qualifying themſelves for *both worlds*: and upon the ſame principle, thoſe who *are not ſincere* act as enemies to the deſign, whilſt they practiſe a miſerable deceit on themſelves. She who overlooks or abuſes the intent of this truly pious undertaking, and *artfully* conceals her real thoughts, may *deceive* her friends, but the *conſequences* will fall heavy on her *own ſoul.*

No perſon of common ſenſe, much leſs a *chriſtian*, can imagine, but that great *commiſeration* ought to be ſhown to people in your circumſtances, and particularly by yourſelves towards each other; but ſtill nothing material in relation to *moral* or *religious deportment* ſhould be concealed from the proper perſons who are to judge of the nature of offences. This may appear as a *hard leſſon*, but in its conſequences it will be the higheſt act of mercy. You will ſhow ſo much the *greater tenderneſs* to your companions in general; you will keep them ſo much the more

in

in awe, as to outward *conduct*; and an *inward purity*, and ſenſe of religion will be acquired ſo much the ſooner. You will alſo add to the *reputation* of this charity, and ſo far be yourſelf a contributer towards the ſupport of it. You may eaſily conceive that every one that leaves the houſe as a *true and ſincere penitent*, will advance the intereſt of it. The whole undertaking is of too ſerious a nature to admit of any *diſguiſe*; and as it is more eaſy to *prevent* an evil than to *cure* it, I therefore put *you* on your guard. To know *when we are well*, requires a good ſhare of underſtanding: and it is impoſſible that *domeſtic peace and harmony* can be built on any other ſtable foundation, than the ſolid truths and practice of chriſtianity. To ſeek for *repentance*, where there is no *contrition*, is juſt as abſurd as to *compel* people to be *religious*. A *deſire* to repent is one great ſtep towards *repentance*; but ſhe who has no deſign to *repent*, muſt be ever *acting a part*, no leſs injurious to her companions than to herſelf.

Conſidering the *numberleſs infirmities of human nature*, the only rule of conduct ſuitable to it, is to overcome *evil* with *good*, and to *compaſſionate* what we cannot *cure*. But when chriſtianity ſteps in, and confirms this great truth, it demands our moſt religious zeal and *attention*.

Good manners is alſo eſſential to *peace*; and thoſe who have moſt *breeding*, will certainly give the beſt proofs of it. The natural tendency of great familiarity is to create contempt: but in ſuch a houſe, calculated for ſuch great and noble ends, peace and harmony are as eſſential as

air. *Prudence*, as well as religion, demands of us to overlook and diſregard many kinds of idle words, in our own *particular caſe*; but with regard to the general œconomy of ſuch a houſe as this, ſuch words muſt be *carefully ſuppreſſed*, even though they ſhould not happen to be of a *malignant* kind; for *repentance* can have no *life* where *concord* is not the *animating principle*.

Whoever utters *indecent* and *reproachful* words, or relates ſtories, whether *true* or *falſe*, to create *uneaſineſs*, ſhould alſo know that ſhe acts like an *enemy* to the *charity*; renders herſelf unworthy the mercy intended; and you may be aſſured, if ſhe perſiſts ſhe will not find any protection in the houſe; I mean, that ſhe will not be *permitted to remain in it*.

There is another fault which too often prevails in the world: indeed it deſerves the name of a *crime*; I mean HYPOCRISY. Deceit is the characteriſtic of the *father of lies*, and too many of thoſe who have forſaken the *guide of their youth*, whether it ariſes moſt from that *wickedneſs* which has eſtranged their hearts from *God*; or from a habit of *artful tenderneſs* to captivate the partners of their *iniquity*, you know *too well* they are generally given to *lying* and *hypocriſy*. Theſe crimes are *abominable* in their own nature, but they receive a *blacker* hue from the ſhade that is caſt on them, under the umbrage of *pretended ſanctity*.

In all caſes we muſt judge with *candor*, and exerciſe our *reaſon*. We muſt accommodate ourſelves to *truth*, for truth will never *bend* to our depravity. Remember the

the *nature* of your own ſituation, and what belongs to you as profeſſing to *love peace*; that *peace*, which *religion* only can give. This is the *object* which I earneſtly recommend to you, for your *daily conſideration*, and as the ſubject of *your daily talk*: and it is this which will render you amiable in the ſight of that GOD, whoſe *mercies* you ſupplicate, and on whoſe *protection* you have thus *wiſely* thrown yourſelf. Act therefore a *conſiſtent* part: do *honor* to *yourſelf*, and to your *friends*, that you may not reproach yourſelf with *folly* and *ingratitude*, in addition to your *former ſins*, and, without any neceſſity, plunge yourſelf into *further diſtreſs*.

With regard to matters of inſtruction, as you *read well*, perhaps you may be called upon to aſſiſt others. There are many ſtrong reaſons for learning to *read well*, at leaſt *agreeably*. A good utterance is a great improvement of *common ſpeech*; and a recommendation to the favor of the world. If it is a ſhame to neglect an opportunity of addreſſing ourſelves to God, it certainly is not leſs ſo, to neglect one of the neceſſary *means* of learning *our duty* to him; and you may obſerve, that the *governors of this charity* are always mindful that thoſe who cannot read at all, ſhould be taught. *Ignorance* has involved many in their *preſent diſtreſs*, and it may be hoped that the removal of that *ignorance*, will remove the *diſtreſs*. This can hardly be done ſo properly and effectually, as by *reading*, that the parties may know how to *employ ſuch of their hours*, as become *dangerous*; for that very *time*, which is more valuable than all the gold of *Brazil*,

Brazil, or the ſilver of *Peru*, when it becomes *burthenſome* to us, is generally *abuſed*, and too often converted to the *vileſt purpoſes*. We ſhall hardly practiſe what we do not *know*; nor can we know *what is right* till we are *inſtructed*. There are certain rules by which we muſt regulate life, if we mean to be happy; and it is more than probable we ſhall *obſerve* them, and conduct our lives the better, on account of reading. Thus in every view *reading* is neceſſary in all ranks of life.

You are now *happy* in having time to think ſeriouſly. Now is your opportunity to ſubdue *bad habits*, and to acquire *good ones:* if you loſe this occaſion, which the *indulgence of heaven* has beſtowed upon you, as it were by a *miracle*, what can you expect hereafter? You are ſenſible that the deſign of this charity is to ſave you, and many ſuch unhappy perſons from *infamy*, *diſeaſe*, and *untimely death:* to habituate the *outcaſt* of the earth to *uſeful induſtry*, and by giving them the faireſt opportunity of *repentance*, adminiſter to the *ſaving their ſouls*.

As you have *parents* and *friends*, I hope they will not be leſs forward in the great duties of *chriſtianity* to their *own blood*; than *ſtrangers* have been to you, on the *common principles* of *humanity* and *religion*. Thoſe who are not ſo happy as to have any parents alive, or none that can be of uſe to them, muſt make themſelves friends. Let them do their duty to GOD, and their *neighbor*, and Providence will never forſake them.

There are many good people in the world, who *conſider* the various calamities of human life, and will give

ſhelter to the wretched, when theſe forſake their evil ways, and ſolicit the mercy of heaven. But as we grievouſly load our account of guilt, when we offend in a fond preſumption that we ſhall one day *repent*, and be accepted by *God*; ſo we tranſgreſs on all the rules of *common prudence*, if we flatter ourſelves, that, tho' wicked, we ſhall receive favor and protection from *mankind*.

As to the *women* who are diſcharged from the *Magdalane Houſe*, if the thought of *future bliſs* and *miſery* truly affects them, they will be enabled to truſt themſelves again in the world; but I hope they will remember, that the united force of *prudence* and *religion* will not be more than a match for the temptations, which they may meet.

For your own part, you ſee I am *your friend*; take heed to your ways. If you tranſgreſs, and are diſcharged, hence there can be no admittance again into *this* houſe; and *God* knows what admittance you will find in any other, except ſuch as lead to the manſions of perdition, which is infinitely worſe than all the other diſtreſſes you can ſuffer, *death* not excepted.

Your *brother* often enquires after you, and I am glad that I can give him ſo good an account. Be aſſured that ſo long as you behave well, you will engage the attention of your friends. FAREWEL.

On Gratitude, as eſſential to Religion.

LETTER XIX.

To the ſame.

ABOVE all things, let me recommend to you to be *grateful.* There is no virtue which can afford you ſo much pleaſure as *gratitude* *; and you may be aſſured, that as no ſatisfaction can be greater than to improve your *underſtanding*, and correct your *affections*, nothing will render you more amiable in the ſight of *God* and *men.* If you conſider it with reſpect to the *common events of life*, it will lead you into the *paths of peace:* the obligation to it is *eternal* and *immutable:* it includes *humility* and *ſubmiſſion*; and as *religion* ought to influence us in the *firſt* place, and above all other things, it ſeems to imply a contradiction, to be *grateful to man*, and *ungrateful to God.*

We make rejoycings at a victory which we obtain over our enemies, who would reduce us to a *dependance* on them, though they cannot ſubdue the *unconquerable* mind; ſhall we not rejoice more exceedingly at our *victory over ſin*, which would plunge our ſouls into *ſlavery* and *everlaſting* miſery? We careſs a *general*, by whoſe *prudence*

* See Gratitude, &c. Vol. 1. page 115.

and *military virtue* ſuch victory was obtained; we acknowledge our obligations to him; we give him our very *hearts*: ſhall not thoſe *hearts* be grateful to the *Great Captain of our ſalvation*, who conquered our *greateſt enemy*, and at length, as a proof of his LOVE, *laid down his life for our ſakes?* As our *Sovereign*, our *Lawgiver*, and our *Judge*, he has commanded us to *remember his precepts*. As our *mighty Saviour and Redeemer*, he has appointed *peculiar rites, in remembrance of his death, until his coming again in glory*; can you forget the ſervice, or *withhold the tribute of your thanks for ſuch ineſtimable benefits?*

Think cloſely. Reaſon is as much reaſon in *religious*, as in *worldly* concerns. With regard to common affairs, we are ſometimes called ungrateful, as if our *minds* were *perverſe*, when the cauſe ariſes from our *affections* being *dull* and *languid*, or our *judgments* weak in diſcerning the favor done us. When we owe an obligation to great numbers, and our affections are expanded, their rays are apt to be loſt: but *gratitude* is not the leſs gratitude, becauſe I receive a favor from the hands of *many*: I am then *obliged to many*; that is, to every one whom I know to be concerned in the *favor*; but more particularly to thoſe who have the *immediate direction* of the kindneſs I receive. If this kindneſs ſhould happen to be over-rated by my *benefactor*, that may be *his fault*, but I will not therefore, *for my own ſake*, ſuppreſs my *ſenſe* of the obligation. But if only a *proper regard* is expected and required, it is an injury to *human ſociety* to withhold it. *Ingratitude* is a *monſter* which ought to be *hunted* out of *all ſociety*.

Every

Every one has not the *gift* of *words* to expreſs their thanks in ſuitable terms; but to be *inſenſible* of gratitude, argues *baſeneſs* or *ſtupidity*. If we conſider the condition in which mankind are placed, as dependant on each other, it is but juſt and natural to be delighted with *good fortune*, and the proſpect of *earthly felicity*: yet it muſt come from the *hands of men*, in ſome ſhape or other; and is it therefore the *leſs pleaſing?* Is there not the higheſt complacency in being an object of the care of our *fellow-creatures?*—of *whom* would we *wiſh* to be *beloved?* So far from a *diſgrace*, it is an earneſt of the *protection of* GOD, *who directs and governs all*: and as this naturally affords great pleaſure to a mind *well taught*, we ſhould *return* the pleaſure *we receive*, by doing to others all the *kindneſs* and *ſervice* we can; and in many caſes the beſt, or only *kindneſs* we can ſhow, is to let them ſee that we intereſt ourſelves in *their* felicity, at the very moment that we promote our own, by acting the part *which is right*, and which they moſt anxiouſly wiſh to ſee us act.

Thus *gratitude* grows into *charity*, which is the bond of all virtues. You ſee there cannot be a more *pleaſing* exerciſe to the ſoul; nor is there any *virtue* that *rewards itſelf more highly*; ſo that had it *no other reward*, any perſon of underſtanding, who conſiders the make of his own mind, who contemplates the *connexions* between *virtue* and *happineſs*, and his dependance on *Providence*, will cheriſh a *grateful temper*. Not to do this is to proclaim ourſelves *ignorant*, *baſe*, and *vile*. Let the benefit, I ſay, be conferred by whomſoever, *God* is the *author and giver of*

all good. Men are only his *inſtruments*, but we may as well pretend to *love* GOD *whom we have not ſeen*, at the very time that we *hate our brother whom we have ſeen*, as to pretend to expreſs *gratitude to God*, when we have *no gratitude to men.* This ſeems to imply an abſurdity in terms.

The good things of *this* world are apt to ſtrike us more forcibly at firſt view, than thoſe which relate to the *next*; but of all the mercies men can ſhow to their fellow-creatures, this which is ſhown to you ſeems to be one of the *moſt eſſential*; and includes all that beneficence, which to thoſe *who believe in the immortality of the ſoul, is the one thing needful.*

Conſider how beſt to expreſs *your gratitude.* If your affections are dull and languid, yet a ſenſe of duty and *principle* will incline you to expreſs it in the way moſt *honorable* to yourſelf, and moſt acceptable to your benefactors, whoſe only concern, as I have already obſerved, is to ſee you do, what is *right* for you to do.

When you ſing the *thankſgiving* hymn * to the Almighty; conſider it, at the ſame time, as an acknowledgment of the power of *gratitude* to exalt your mind. And when you leave *the houſe*, if you mean to expreſs a real ſenſe of your obligation, be *virtuous*, and remember that you cannot return to a *vicious* courſe without plunging yourſelf into the guilt of the moſt *enormous ingratitude to God and man*, which, tho' not puniſhable as ſuch, by any human laws, is reſerved for that *dreadful ſcene* which no pen can deſcribe! I am, *&c.*

Good

* *When all thy mercies, O my God*, &c. as ſung at the *Magdalane Chapel.*

Good Example. Truth and Falſhood. Honeſty. Slander. Temperance. Friendſhip. Diverſions. Dancing. Dreſs. Company. Marriage. Jealouſy. Induſtry. Enthuſiaſm. Immortality.

LETTER XX.

To the ſame.

SEEING how *dangerous* a thing life is, under all its advantages, and that happineſs is the great object in purſuit, we muſt conſider what will beſt promote that happineſs with reſpect to the particular condition of life, in which Providence has placed us; ever carrying in our breaſt the deepeſt ſenſe of this *great truth*, that the ſoul of the *peaſant*, and the ſoul of the *king*, are of equal value in the ſight of *God*. Let us do the beſt we can. Life is a ſcene of care, and *prudence* is the offspring of *experience*, eſpecially of that experience which we learn from *diſtreſs*. You are now going into the world again, and as I cannot help conſidering you, in many reſpects, as a *daughter of my own*, I will make you the *beſt preſent* I am able.

Tho' it is more eaſy to *give*, than to apply good counſel, it is nevertheleſs one of the beſt things we can *receive*; the application muſt depend entirely on ourſelves. If my precautions to you ſhould not anſwer the purpoſe intended, the crime will be your own, and you will be ſo far the leſs

without excuſe. *But I truſt in God my labor will not be thrown away.*

In the *firſt place*, let me adviſe you to caſt your eye upon ſome *living example*, where *good ſenſe and piety*, *good humour and induſtry*, are the ruling principles of life. When you find yourſelf going too faſt or too ſlow, look at the *copy* you mean to imitate. If it is not your good fortune to get at the acquaintance, or knowledge of ſuch a character, ſeek for one in books, and render yourſelf an *original*, by a ſtedfaſt adherence to ſuch principles as you adopt: and above all, conſider well what the *Saviour* of *mankind taught* and *practiſed*.

Remember that all the *ſocial* duties of life are *reciprocal*; and if you hope to *receive* any favor or indulgence, you muſt endevor to deſerve them, by an *obliging*, an *ingenuous*, and *ſincere* behavior. Though you ſhould be able to carry a point by *falſhood* and *hypocriſy*, yet if you believe in a ſtate of *rewards* and *puniſhments after death*, you muſt ſee that you will be infinitely the loſer by the bargain. The great foundation of happineſs to *rational* and *accountable Beings*, is an inviolable attachment to *truth*. We cannot lie to the prejudice of *another*, without *malice* or *villainy*; nor in excuſe for *ourſelves*, without guilt or *cowardice*: in both caſes we either propoſe a *direct advantage* to ourſelves, or to *prevent ſome miſchief*, but the greateſt miſchief and diſadvantage of all is, that we are at the ſame moment bartering with the DEVIL *for our ſouls*, and throwing them away for *trifles*. This practice, at the beſt, generally brings on great contempt,

and

and we loſe all *truſt* and *credit*: whereas *truth* carries with it ſo much *dignity* and *reſpect*, that the very confeſſion of a treſpaſs eſtabliſhes an opinion, that we are *ſorry* for it, and that we are not guilty of any other: and that which is modeſtly acknowledged, is eaſily forgiven.

Truth in ſpeech, or words, naturally leads to truth in *actions*; and it is impoſſible for a *diſhoneſt perſon* to be a *faithful* ſervant to *God* or *man*, or to enjoy the pleaſures which wait on *virtuous deeds*. Thoſe who eſcape without being puniſhed or detected, *tremble at their own thoughts*: the conſciouſneſs of guilt, and the dread of a diſcovery, *torment their ſouls* on this ſide the grave, unleſs they are totally given over and abandoned by *God himſelf*. But *innocence* looks up towards heaven with joy, rich in *comfort*, rich in *hope*; diſdaining the thought of *diſhoneſty*, ſtands undaunted before *God* and *man*.

"*She that has light within her own clear breaſt,*
"*May ſit i' th' center, and enjoy bright day;*
"*But ſhe that hides a dark ſoul, and foul thoughts,*
"*Benighted walks under the mid-day ſun;*
"*Herſelf is her own dungeon.*"

I am ſorry to ſay, there are too many *little arts* and *contrivances* practiſed by both ſexes, of the *great* as well as the *little vulgar*. The honeſt beggar may diſdain the conduct of a prince; and upon the ſame account that an *honeſt man* is ſaid to be *the nobleſt work of God*, an *honeſt woman* is certainly not leſs ſo. Every thing that is right, juſt,

juſt, and *decorous*, cannot paſs under a more amiable name than *honeſty*; and to tell a *man* he is falſe to his word, or unjuſt in his dealings, or a *woman* that ſhe is a *harlot*, cannot be expreſſed in ſtronger terms, than that they are *diſhoneſt*.

And, alas! what *diſhoneſt tricks* are often played off upon the nobleſt affections of the human ſoul. How often have I ſeen a ſtorm of *artificial paſſion* ſhake a *female breaſt*, and heard ſighs from the heart, as if it were breaking;

"*Whilſt waiting tears ſtood ready for command,*
"*And often flow'd, to varniſh a falſe tale.*"

In a word, the ways of being *diſhoneſt*, are as numerous as the inventions of *hell* and the *devil:* therefore if you have heaven in your eye, and hope to get thither, wear but *one face*, though the world ſhould burſt around you. GOD IS TRUTH; and when you depart from *truth*, you depart from *God*.

Charity is the bond of ſociety: avoid all ſuch diſcourſe as may *injure* others. To ſay all he knows is the taſk of an *idiot*; and to ſay any thing that can hurt another, is generally a proof of our depravity; and *evil* reports in the *moral*, are as ſtorms and tempeſts in the *natural* world.

Never ſay any thing *evil of any one*; and this will be the ſureſt way for *no one* to ſay *evil of you*. If you attempt to gloſs over your former conduct, by railing at other *fooliſh*, *wicked*, or *unhappy women*, or *men*, when your

your own conduct is not called in queſtion, you may not only do *them* an irreparable injury, but *yourſelf* alſo. Your reputation, as well as the integrity of your heart, may both be laid waſte by your own *indiſcretion*. I know but of one rule, when other peoples lives are in queſtion, which is, to be ſilent, if I can ſay *no good* of them.

That you may *never* depart from that *integrity* of mind, which I wiſh you, with all my ſoul, whatever your *future fortune* ſhall be, let me caution you againſt all kinds of *intemperance*. Food is intended for the ſupport of our bodies, not the *gratification of our appetite*, though hunger neceſſarily provides *good ſauce*. *Sleep* alſo is deſigned by nature only as a refreſhment. An over indulgence in *meats*, *drinks*, or *ſleep*, is deſtructive of the *health* of the body, and the *vigor* of the ſoul. For the ſame reaſon, and exactly upon the ſame principle, an intemperate purſuit of what is called *pleaſure*, is one of the greateſt evils incident to human nature, and may be juſtly ſtiled the *complaint of the times*. It is very elegantly obſerved, that "*we wiſh away whole years, and travel through time as thro' a country filled with many wild and dreary waſtes, longing to arrive at certain imaginary points of reſt which are diſperſed up and down in it. We fly from one object to another ſtill reſtleſs and unſatisfied.*" By expecting a great deal more than theſe objects can give, we find a great deal leſs; and ſeeing that *amuſements* are ſometimes neceſſary, we are apt to think them the only thing *deſirable*. In proportion as our firſt impreſſions are *wrong*, juſt as the firſt con-

concoction of the aliments of our bodies, *indigeſted notions* about pleaſure, breed a multitude of *ill humours*.

Of all human purſuits there is no enjoyment comparable to *virtuous friendſhip*, agreeable to what I have already mentioned, of the example of a *virtuous* perſon; but ſhe muſt be *truly virtuous*, or you had far better converſe with your own heart, and grow fond of your own ideas of virtue. Nothing is better calculated for the *government of the paſſions*, or the *improvement of the underſtanding*, than *friendſhip*, if well choſen.

Next to the *labor of our own hands*, and *heads*, in the way which Providence has pointed out to us, the entertainment derived from *pious*, *uſeful*, or *amuſing* books, which have no tendency to *corrupt* the heart, is a perpetual ſource of *comfort* and *relief* to the mind, ever in ſearch of action; and human nature being ſtill the ſame, the *change of objects* among the *rich* or *poor*, is not ſo great as is imagined.

To adviſe the *ignorant*, relieve the *needy*, and comfort the *afflicted*, afford a vaſt field for filling up our *vacant* time. Mitigating the fierceneſs of anger; doing juſtice to injured characters; ſoothing the envious into pity; and gently leading thoſe who are ſlaves to their prejudices into the ways of truth: theſe are employments ſuited to us as reaſonable *creatures*, and to be enamoured of *any object* which *reaſon* cannot ſupport, is certainly a proof that we are *going wrong*.

The duties of *filial* or *fraternal*, *connubial* or *parental* love, with all their various connections, ſhould employ

ploy large portions of our time, whilſt *devotion* and the *government of our paſſions* ſanctify the *whole*.

In the mean while, the amuſements which are *leaſt expenſive*, are not only moſt *durable*, but alſo moſt *ſolidly delightful*. *Riding*, or *walking* in fine weather, and ſurveying the beautiful face of the *earth*, and the *heavens*, are far more enchanting than the moſt brilliant court, were it adorned with *ten millions* value in *diamonds*, and a *thouſand luſtres*. Theatrical and muſical entertainments of the moſt virtuous and beſt regulated kind, are alſo noble amuſements: but a great fondneſs for them becomes a *crime*, eſpecially if the *expence* is above our *fortunes*. CARDS to a certain degree may be permitted, but when people contract a love for them, all *thought* and *time* are laid waſte, and every thing that is truly worthy, ſubmits to the moſt *barbarous deſpotiſm* over the ſoul: and when people play for more than they can afford to loſe, which happens too often, theſe *impliments* of amuſement, are fit only for thoſe who would pick their *neighbors pockets*, if they could do it with *impunity*.

As to *dancing*, the inhabitants of the eaſtern world, who beſt retain the original ſimple ideas of things, aſſign this employment to the lower claſſes of the people only; and a *great man* keeps men and women to dance before him, for his amuſement, as we keep *running horſes*, or *game cocks*. It would be ſhameful among them for any perſon of *condition*, or *fair fame*, to be ſeen *dancing*. This is *their* notion;—and what is *ours*? The poet ſays,

" *What is't defends the purity of melting maids*
" *In courtly balls and midnight maſquerades,*
" *Safe from the treach'rous friend, or daring ſpark,*
" *The glance by day, or whiſper in the dark,*
" *When kind occaſion prompts their warm deſires,*
" *When muſic ſoftens, and when dancing fires?*"

I can tell him what it is:—it is *native modeſty*, or a *ſenſe of ſhame*; *ſelf-love*, as expreſſed in *prudence*; and it may be hoped, that the *chriſtian religion* has ſome effect on *profeſſed chriſtians*. Beſides, all *men* and *women* are not of the ſame complexion, and *all* places are not fit for *amours*. Modeſt reſorts *being well regulated* are uſeful for *amuſement*, for *ſociety*, and for making young perſons acquainted, by which *marriage* is promoted. But things which are warrantable to *ſome*, who have *time* and *money* to ſpare, and whoſe *characters* are untainted, may not be ſo to others; and that which is warrantable in a certain degree and manner, is not ſo, if the due meaſure is neglected, much leſs are all things *expedient* which are warrantable. — The *exceſs* of any thing is dangerous; and however the harmony of motion may pleaſe the moſt harmonized mind, the *tumults* and diſorders of the major part of *dancing meetings* cannot have any *good* effects; *bad* ones I believe they often have; and the moſt innocent are in danger of being *off their guard*, and of *diſſipating* their thoughts, if not *ruffling* them: and it ſeems to be a proof of this, that dancers are often intoxicated with fondneſs for their diverſion, and, like men that love ſtrong drink, ſeldom know

know when they have *enough*. They often protract their amuſement beyond *all decency* in point of *hours*, both with regard to health, and their ability to diſcharge the duties of life the next day.

Upon the whole view of the matter, *dancing meetings* in general, *in the manner now in uſe*, I think do ſome miſchief to the moſt *innocent*, who frequent them; and too many ſuch meetings are *abſolutely calculated for no other deſign than debauchery*.

Let the *gay world*, *innocent* or *vicious*, do as they *pleaſe*; and reconcile the *exceſs*, as they *can*; I charge you, *as you ſhall remember the regard I ſhow you*, and what is of *infinitely* greater conſequence, as you mean to take care of *your own ſoul*, not to mix in any ſuch *public* aſſemblies. It is more than probable *your face* will be remembered, and you will run a double riſk. Your very appearance will be an *invitation* to *libertines*; and the notion of your being a *penitent*, or having forſaken an *evil courſe of life*, will only quicken their *deſire*, or excite their *deriſion*. When time ſhall leave you no remains of *beauty*, you will hardly have any great inclination for ſuch *paſtime*; but whilſt it laſts, if you ſhould be in a condition of life to frequent ſuch places, *take my advice*, and ſhun them. You will certainly be a *gainer* by the bargain.

If you are wiſe, I think you will alſo ſhow your *good ſenſe*, as well as your *repentance*, by *your dreſs*. Abſurd *finery*, or a *flaunting dreſs*, ſeems to be a kind of *public proclamation*, that a woman is, has been, or would be, a *harlot*; which I ſuppoſe no *modeſt* woman would chuſe.

It

It is generally conſidered as a *female privilege*, though when carried beyond a certain mark argues *levity* of mind, if not *corruption* of heart. Fortune-hunters of both ſexes may conſider *fine clothes* as eſſential to their ſucceſs: but for a woman to throw away her ſoul, for a *taudry* garment, as many a *ſilly girl* has done, is moſt ſhocking indeed to common ſenſe, as well as religion. O REASON, *where art thou, when we give up* HEAVEN, *to tickle our vanity, for a moment; to be* ADMIRED *by ourſelves, and* LAUGHED *at, or pitied by the reſt of mankind!* Need I tell you that there is any thing which can endanger your virtue more, than an indulgence of this *foible*? At beſt it will create great *anxiety*; but it *may* put you on ſuch means of obtaining this gratification, as will render your *repentance* an abomination.

I remember the ſtory of a *Frenchman*, who in order to diſtinguiſh himſelf in the ſight of PETER THE GREAT, *Czar of Moſcovy*, appeared in a different ſuit of cloaths for *thirty* ſucceſſive days, till at length being obliged to wear one of the ſame over again, the CZAR *wiſhed him joy* that his taylor had fitted him. Such is the *little* regard which perſons of ſenſe ſhow to dreſs. Our wiſdom is beſt ſhown in ſuch apparel as ſuits our *condition*, not ſordid, filthy, nor *fantaſtic*; but *clean, decent, modeſt*, with ſuch elegancy as our fortunes will admit. Nor in the eye of *reaſon*, or genuine *taſte*, is there any *beauty* in cutting as much ſilk into ſhreads as will half make a gown, and being at three times the expence, upon the whole, as before this *extravagant frenchified whim came in vogue!*

What-

Whatever condition of life we are placed in, it is difficult to avoid falling ſometimes into *bad company*, I mean the company of people that want ſenſe or virtue; and you cannot be too cautious. Perhaps you will not immediately diſcover their *temper*, and *diſpoſition* in particular, for in this world, moſt characters are of a *mixed* kind; but it is become proverbial, *to know a man by his company*, and it is hardly poſſible but that our manners ſhould take ſome tincture from perſons with whom we aſſociate. It is the great buſineſs of thoſe who are moſt anxious for the good of mankind, to correct others if they can, or to ſhun them if they cannot; but by no means to countenance ſuch an intercourſe, as may divert them from the purſuits, which they are convinced in their hearts, do truly conſtitute their *happineſs*.

It will be hardly poſſible for you to retain your *integrity*, if you converſe familiarly with the licentious of either ſex; for if you ſhould not directly loſe your virtue, you will loſe your *character*, which is the external part of virtue; and this being played away, and virtue itſelf left *unguarded*, it often follows, as if our only refuge were in *iniquity*: therefore let me entreat you, to be on your guard, and to aſſociate only with ſuch perſons as are exemplary for *ſobriety of life*, and whom you have the utmoſt reaſon to think, are *true worſhippers of God*. The only way to make yourſelf acceptable to the *wiſe* and *virtuous*, is by *wiſdom* and *virtue*; one eſſential part of which is *prudence*. *Humanity*, *affability*, and a *readineſs to oblige*, will alſo make

your company ſought by them, as well as theirs acceptable to you: like naturally aſſimilates with like, as we ſee even among birds and beaſts.

If you ſhould diſcover, that you are *known* to have been in the *Magdalane Houſe*; you may ſuppoſe that no perſon of ſenſe, can with the leaſt charity, draw any other concluſion, than that as you have been a *ſinner*, you have *repented*, which is more than many have done, who are not known to be ſinners, or have not *ſinned in the ſame way*, and yet have great need of repentance.

True *penitence*, and a *virtuous* life, will create humility of ſoul: and that deportment, which is neceſſary to preſerve the *effects* of real repentance, will engage the favor of the ſerious and *ſenſible part of mankind*: *others* muſt be kept at a diſtance, by that conduct which always carries with it reſpect and awe, when a woman is *really virtuous*, and deſires to remain ſo. But if neither this, nor the authority of *ſuperiors* prevails, *prudence* requires a total ſeparation from ſuch perſons as turn the grace of God into *fooliſhneſs*. Thoſe who ſcoff at repentance in others, will hardly ever repent of their own ſins.

If you ſhould be ſo fortunate as to *marry* a man who is totally ignorant of your ſtory, it will be as *imprudent* to truſt him with it, as it may be, to deny it, ſhould you unluckily be challenged; ſince what you *have been*, is nothing to what *you are*. In either caſe, let your deportment be ſo unexceptionably *modeſt*, that you may not give the leaſt occaſion of *offence*: but in the laſt inſtance do

do not allow yourſelf any of thoſe freedoms in diſcourſe with men, which in common life are termed *jocoſe*.

The depravity of mankind have introduced a great degree of miſery into that ſtate, which, if properly treated, is the *moſt happy*, becauſe the *moſt agreeable to our ſocial affections*. Uſe yourſelf to conſider every kind of ſecret practice, or *deceitful* carriage, as real iniquity. *Without love*, marriage is but a dull kind of contract; and *with* it there is frequently ſome mixture of that paſſion or turn of mind, which for want of a better word, is called *jealouſy*. Tho' weak-minded or ſuſpicious perſons, are generally alarmed upon the moſt trifling incidents, where their love is moſt ſincere; yet where there is a due portion of good ſenſe, on the part of the *huſband* or *wife*, to correct this turn of mind, it rather cements the bond by a mutual care of each other's ſafety, and fans the lambent flame, than extinguiſhes the fire of love. In any caſe, if judgment is wanting on both ſides, *love* will grow into *diſquiet*, if not *diſguſt*; and there are but few ſteps between *indifference* and *averſion*. If you are *wiſe*, conſider the care and attention which your huſband may ſhow, as a prudent ſolicitude for your preſervation; and not as *jealouſy*, to excite your reſentment.

Our *frailties* being common, ſo ought to be our *forgiveneſs*; and where love is, there can be no room for *malice*, much leſs for *revenge*. Even *occaſional* anger generally falls on our own heads; therefore let *chearfulneſs* and *tenderneſs*, with an open and obliging carriage, ſecure the heart of the man, whom Providence, in mercy to your *ſtate and condition*, ſhall give you. Let the *ſim-*

plicity of your manners, and the *integrity* of your life, be ſuch, that he may not have the leaſt temptation to depart from his love for you, if he is a man with *human affections:* and I hope *you* will never depart from the *love of God*, whatever your huſband may be: for even *unkindneſs to you*, can be no reaſon for your *unkindneſs to yourſelf*; or, in other words, for your throwing off thoſe ties to virtue, which are juſt the ſame, whether he be *good* or *bad:* for this, like other evils, can be conſidered only as a *trial* of virtue.

Let your *induſtry* keep pace with your *love*, that *want* may not create any temptation to abandon your own principles, with reſpect to *God* or your *huſband*.

Though young in ſin, knowing what iniquity is, you ſhould be doubly cautious of the conduct of your own children, if you ſhould have any. You know how the world is beſet with *evils*; and whatever rank or condition you are in, your obligations to virtue can never be changed.

As you may poſſibly incline to extremes in *piety*, let me caution you to avoid every thing that is *enthuſiaſtic* or *ſuperſtitious*. I have given you my thoughts already, that if you offer to God the incenſe of a *virtuous life*, your prayers will be accepted by him. To conſider yourſelf as under his care, will be a ſure ſource of *joy* and *comfort*. Remember that your actions are marked down in his book, and it will awe your conduct, and keep you from offending him. Love virtue for its own charms; and love it more for the happineſs which it promiſes. Let no *raving preacher*, who thunders damnation in your ears, draw

from

from you, your *money*, your *time*, or your *tears*. Be *ſteady* and *attentive* to what the ſcriptures, and your *pariſh miniſter* ſhall teach you. Think what you ought *to do*, and *do it*; what you ought *not to do*, and *ſhun it*: and call to heaven for the mercy *of God*, *which endureth for ever!*

I have now only to recommend to you the frequent conſideration of that, which no mortal ſhould ever forget. Be conſtant in your *addreſſes to God in public, and private*: read the ſcriptures with equal *conſtancy, ſincerity, and care*; and think of your own *immortality*. — You know that the day is coming on, when even this goodly frame the *world* will *diſſolve*; and

" *Like the baſeleſs fabrick of a viſion,*
" *Leave not a wreck behind!* "

How much more theſe frail tenements, *our bodies*, which every blaſt of wind is apt to diſorder. Be *confidently* aſſured that the *ſoul* will never die:

" *The ſtars ſhall fade away; the ſun himſelf*
" *Grow dim with age, and nature ſink in years:*
" *But this will floriſh in immortal youth,*
" *Unhurt, amidſt the wars of elements,*
" *The wreck of matter, and the cruſh of worlds!* "

Think of theſe things every day of your life; and ſo long as you are *virtuous*, I will be *your very true friend*.
FAREWEL.

The great Advantages of Chaſtity and an innocent Life.

LETTER XXI.

To the ſame.

I Have yet to add a few admonitions in relation to thoſe fallacious arguments, which are often made uſe of to ſeduce the unwary. Though you have known the *deceitfulneſs of ſin* in ſome diſguiſes; you can hardly be acquainted with it, in all its forms.

In every ſtruggle of your heart, with reſpect to what is generally denominated the *good things* of this world, which are ſo much coveted, *remember* that neither *faith*, *hope*, nor *charity*, depend on wealth: that *temperance*, *chaſtity*, and *fortitude* often depend on an humble fortune, but wealth is never eſſential to the ſupport of thoſe virtues. *Juſtice*, *meekneſs*, and *mercy*, have alſo no greater connexion with *riches* than with *poverty*; ſince we often ſee *poor juſt men*, and *opulent villains*. Therefore in every view, you will diſcover, that *food* and *raiment*, and ſuch things as are *neceſſary to your well-being*, are *ſufficient to your virtue*; and that *virtue* is your ſupreme felicity. Lay this down as an *invariable principle*, and adhere to it with all your heart, and all your ſoul, even as you are *ſincere* in your love of God.

" *Short is the courſe of ev'ry lawleſs pleaſure;*
" GRIEF, *like a ſhade, on all its footſteps waits,*
" *Scarce viſible in* JOY'S *meridian height;*
" *But downwards, as its blaze declining ſpeeds,*
" *The dwarfiſh ſhadow to a giant ſpreads.*
Too oft you've heard baſe tongues profane the name
" *Of ſacred virtue, and yet promiſe pleaſure*
" *In lying ſongs of vanity and vice!*
" *From virtue ſever'd, pleaſure phrenzy grows*
" *The gay delirium of a fev'riſh mind,*
" *And always flies at reaſon's cool return.*
" *Alike from* LOVE'S *and* PLEAURE'S *path they ſtray,*
Who vain and fooliſh, blindly ſeek them out:
" *Their pleaſure riot, luſt their boaſted love.*
" *Capricious, wanton, bold, and brutal luſt*
" *Is meanly ſelfiſh, when reſiſted, cruel;*
" *And, like the blaſt of peſtilential winds,*
" *Taints the ſweet bloom of nature's faireſt forms.*
" *How lows ſinks* BEAUTY *when by vice debas'd?*
" *How fair her form when virtue dwells within?*"

If you are *wiſe*, you will ſoon find the difference between what is truly *pleaſant* to you, as a *rational* and *accountable Being*, and what is neceſſary to that which is called a *pleaſurable life*. The one will give you relief, as a *fountain of living water* will ſatisfy your thirſt: the other, whilſt it diverts the *preſent moments* of thoſe who have the means of ſuch pleaſure in their hands, leaves them diſſatisfied and *reſtleſs*, toſſed about

by a *feveriſh will*, in danger of being *wrecked* and loſing all happineſs: and thoſe who have not ſuch means, what can *they* expect but miſery? On the other hand remember that

" *The virtuous mind that ever walks attended*
By her true friend and guardian, CONSCIENCE,
" *May welcome* PURE-EY'D FAITH, WHITE-
" HANDED HOPE,
" *Thoſe hov'ring angels, girt with golden wings!*
" *And thou unblemiſh'd form of* CHASTITY!
" *And* HE, *the ſupreme good (t' whom all things ill*
" *Are but as ſlaviſh officers of vengeance)*
Is always ready, with indulgent care
To keep our *lives* and *honor* uninſnar'd.
" *But beauty, like the fair* HESPERIAN *tree,*
" *Laden with blooming gold, had need the guard*
" *Of dragon watch, with uninchanted eye,*
" *To ſave her bloſſoms and defend her fruit,*
" *From the raſh hand of bold incontinence.*
" ——— *For when vile luſt*
" *By unchaſte looks, looſe geſtures, and foul talk,*
" *But moſt by lewd and laviſh act of ſin,*
" *Lets in defilement to the inward parts,*
" *The ſoul grows clotted by contagion,*
" *Imbodies, and imbrutes, till ſhe quite loſe*
" *The divine property of her firſt being.*
But ſhe that's chaſte, and free from pride, or bold
Preſumption, is clad in complete ſteel,

And

And virtue ſtands by her own vote abſolv'd,

" *Nor aſks an echo from the tongues of men,*
" *To tell what hourly to herſelf ſhe proves.*
" *Who wants his own, no other praiſe enjoys;*
" *His ear receives it as a fulſome tale,*
" *To which his heart in ſecret gives the lye:*
" *Nay, ſlander'd innocence muſt feel a peace,*
" *An inward peace, which flatter'd guilt ne'er knew.*"

We have here the moſt *nervous* expreſſions, in *poetical* language, of the *malignant* effects of giving ourſelves up to ſuch commerce as *divine laws* forbid, and at the ſame time the *higheſt praiſes* of the joys of a virtuous life. As to human laws, they can only diſcountenance this practice, for it is evidently above their reach in moſt inſtances: but ſince *pleaſure* is the object ſought, and *true pleaſure is not forbidden* by GOD or men, learn where to look for ſuch pleaſure.

" *Not on beds of fading flowers,*
" *Shedding ſoon their gaudy pride;*
" *Nor with ſwains in* SYREN *bowers,*
" *Will true pleaſure 'ere reſide.*

" *On awful* VIRTUE's *hill ſublime,*
" *Enthroned ſits th'* IMMORTAL FAIR,
" *Who wins her height, muſt patient climb,*
" *The ſteps are peril, toil, and care.*
" *So from the firſt did heav'n ordain*
" *Eternal bliſs for tranſient pain.—*

" *In the realms of peace above,*
" *In the ſource of heav'nly love,*
" *Where tuneful angels in a glitt'ring ring,*
" *To the celeſtial lyre's eternal ſtring,*
" *Patient* VIRTUE's *triumph ſing.*"

The time is drawing near, if it is not already come, when this *great truth* will appear to you in the ſtrongeſt point of view; you have reaſon to believe it already. Though ſenſe and imagination may repreſent things under diſguiſe, and try to cheat us by bribing even *reaſon* to plead their cauſe; yet *vice* and *virtue* will ever be at variance, as much as *miſery* and *happineſs*. I make no doubt but you have heard *libertines* contend for their indulgences, upon the *plauſible* pretence of following *nature*: they ſay, as the poet expreſſes it,

" ——— *If all the world,*
" *Should in a pet of temp'rance, feed on pulſe,*
" *Drink the* CLEAR STREAM, *and nothing wear but*
" FRIZE,
" *Th' Allgiver would be unthank'd, would be unprais'd,*
" *Not half his riches known, and yet deſpis'd:*
" *And we ſhould ſerve him as a grudging maſter,*
" *As a penurious niggard of his wealth,*
" *And live like nature's baſtards, not her ſons,*
" *Who would be quite ſurcharg'd with her own weight,*
" *And ſtrangle with her waſte fertility.*"

The anſwer to ſuch kinds of reaſoning is obvious to a child; but there are ſome things intelligible to the innocence and

and ſimplicity of childhood, which the *corrupted* heart of man *cannot* comprehend, or *will not* ſee. No:

" *Let us not charge moſt innocent nature*
" *As if ſhe would her children ſhould be riotous*
" *With her abundance. She, good catereſs,*
" *Means her proviſion only to the good,*
" *That live according to her ſober laws,*
" *And holy dictate of ſpare temperance.*
" *If ev'ry juſt man, that now pines with want,*
" *Had but a mod'rate and beſeeming ſhare*
" *Of that which lewdly pamper'd* LUXURY,
" *Now heaps upon ſome few, with vaſt exceſs,*
" *Nature's full bleſſings would be well diſpens'd*
" *In unſuperfluous, even proportion* *,
" *And ſhe no whit encumber'd with her ſtore;*
" *And then the* GIVER *wou'd be better thank'd,*
" *His praiſe due paid. For ſwiniſh gluttony*
" *Ne'er looks to heav'n, amidſt his gorgeous feaſt,*
" *But with beſotted baſe ingratitude*
" *Crams and blaſphemes his feeder.*" —

Behold a fair leſſon, as it were written in characters of gold, engraved on plates of adamant, how nearly the virtues of *chaſtity*, *temperance*, and *mercy* to the diſtreſſed, unite their force; and whilſt they combine to make us happy here, prepare the way to everlaſting joys! *Once more* FAREWEL.

Under

* *The poet here only means to correct falſe reaſoning, and check luxury or vicious exceſs; not a communion of worldly goods, which the ſtate of the world will by no means admit of.*

Under a Suſpicion that the Party, though reconciled to her Parents, was not ſteady.

LETTER XXII.

To ——

IT muſt be a *new* ſubject of reflection to you, that there ſhould be any care taken to preſerve a ſenſe of religion on a *woman*'s mind, with a view to preſerve her from pollution, when ſo many are eager to gratify their vicious deſires at the expence of every thing that is valuable to her: but you may be aſſured, that the ſame good Providence, which ſnatched you out of the jaws of *deſtruction*, will preſerve you, if you do your part. I hope that a habit of *piety* and *induſtry*, though it is but of a *few weeks*, joined to a juſt remembrance of your former miſery, will heal the wounds made in your ſoul, during the time in which you wore the *ſhackles of folly* and *iniquity*. And the ſame *merciful God*, to the obedience of whoſe laws you profeſs to be returned, will ſupport you in the *world*, as well as he has done in this *retirement*, if you are ſincere in imploring his aſſiſtance, and uſe the means which *reaſon* and *religion* point out.

You have heard *ſeveral ſermons* upon the ſubject of your *ſalvation:* you have been often upon your knees in *public prayer* to ſupplicate the forgiveneſs of your ſins; you have

have had *private* devotions alſo, and read religious *books*; but all this will vaniſh *like a dream*, unleſs you take a *firm* and *vigorous* reſolution to ſhun every temptation to the ſin which you have repented of. If you mean to do this effectually, you muſt avoid all your *evil companions*: unleſs you intend to give up yourſelf as a play-game to thoſe, who, under the diſguiſe of friendſhip, meditate your deſtruction, you muſt not come within the poiſon of their tongues; you may be again infected by their pernicious *counſel*, and *example*, but I fear you will not bring them over to a due ſenſe of their own *ſad condition*: therefore, if you have any regard for your own *ſoul*, fly from them as your moſt *inveterate* enemies.

There have been perſons, I preſume, the love of whom might have induced you to throw yourſelf *between them and a dagger directed at their breaſt*. Now think of *your own ſafety, and guard yourſelf*. Arm your heart with *reſolution in your own defence*; not from a dagger, which can only deſtroy *your body*, but from thoſe ſins which will deſtroy *your ſoul*. You cannot ſuppoſe but that the *ſoul* will exiſt after death, as certainly as the *body* now exiſts. You believe there is a *God*, and a *ſtate of rewards and puniſhments after death*; conſequently you muſt believe that the ſoul is immortal. You acknowledge that the *Son of God* died on the croſs to redeem you from your ſins; but you cannot be ſo *weak*, ſo extremely *ſtupid*, as to imagine, that ſuch a *belief*, or ſuch a *redemption* will avail you, if you return to the practice of ſin. Do not expect it: the thing is *impoſſible*. *Repentance* is the abſolute condition

dition of *forgiveneſs*; and without *virtue*, what hope, or what title can you have to *mercy?*

Remember that the *dye* is thrown: there is *no retreating:* you muſt *conquer* or *periſh.* If you are not *happy* in a future ſtate, you muſt be *miſerable* in that ſtate; not for *days* or *years*; but, terrible as the thought is, even *for ever*—under *that puniſhment*, which thoſe muſt ſuffer, *who wantonly throw away their ſouls!* So it appears from the concurrent voice of all the *chriſtian world.* And as the poſſeſſion of the whole earth cannot afford ſo much joy as the conſideration of *immortal bliſs*, *if you do your duty*; neither can the utmoſt extent of earthly miſery, create ſo much *ſorrow*, if you diſregard it.

The horſe which ruſhes into the battle, inſenſible of danger, can *only die*; *his being* terminates with his *life:* but man is made for *eternity*, and will exiſt *for ever!* He is made a *little lower than the angels* of heaven, and is appointed the heir of *everlaſting happineſs.* Yet if you ſuffer *your reaſon* to ſleep, and give yourſelf up a prey to *your appetites*, or *fooliſh imaginations*, you will certainly be diſinherited; you will not only *forfeit* your happineſs, but be miſerably *undone for ever!* If you reſolve to throw care aſide, and not conſider at all what *account* you ſhall give of *yourſelf*, how will it fare with you, when the *great day of reckoning comes? How near your laſt day is*, GOD *only knows: far off it cannot be*; *fools only think their end at a great diſtance.*

The paths of virtue always require *vigilance* and *caution.* I hope you have ſtrength ſufficient to walk in it.

You

You will ſoon find *comfort* and *pleaſure*, far beyond the momentary tranſports of *lewdneſs* and *debauchery*, could you enjoy them under all the advantages of *health* and *plenty*; but you know from *ſad experience* in your own perſon, and in the perſon of many others, that the ways of vice are full of *thorns*, and lead to *poverty* and *diſgrace*, *contempt* and *infamy*: and ſo certain as they create pains of *body*, thoſe who die in their ſins, will plunge their *ſouls* into torment! And as to *your particular caſe*, I have no words to expreſs the *horror* which my heart feels, at this moment, at the very thought of ſuch *complicated ingratitude* againſt *God*, and againſt your *fellow-creatures*, as your return to vice would be, after ſuch a *deliverance* as you have had.

For my own part, I ſhall think myſelf happy as a *man*, and as a *chriſtian*, as well as a *governor of this charity*, if I can make an impreſſion on your heart: and becauſe I eſteem the being a *chriſtian* a much higher honor than any the *world* can confer on me, I wiſh that you ſhould be of the ſame mind; and therefore I entreat you, for *heaven's ſake*, to be cautious how you proceed. I am yours, *&c.*

Under

Under the ſame Suſpicions of the Integrity of the Party.

LETTER XXIII.

To the ſame.

ANXIOUS for your ſafety, and *ſuſpicious* of your deſigns, I take an opportunity *once more* to remind you of your *danger*. If you think that I mean your happineſs: if you believe I am *capable* of diſcovering truths level to every common capacity, *ſuch truths* as are clear as the ſun at noon day, to every one whoſe heart is not totally eſtranged from God: if, I ſay, you will do *me* this common juſtice, who am ready to do much for *you*; attend to what I ſay.—*Tremble, O earth, and weep, O heavens, at the perdition of a human ſoul!* Do *you* not *tremble* at the thought of returning into the habitations of *death*, and of liſting yourſelf among thoſe who are at *war with heaven?*

I would now plead *your cauſe*.—If you *think* at all, concerning the *being of a God*, and a ſtate of *rewards* and *puniſhments* after death, you muſt *conclude*, that if you do not *enjoy* the one, you muſt *ſuffer* the other, and were your heart as hard as *adamant*, you would feel *ſome reſtraint*. My *obedience* to the *Great Lord of heaven and earth*, who now awakens my heart to a ſenſe of *your miſery*, calls upon me

me to exercise my *charity* towards *you*.—My *earnest desire* to do an acceptable service to the *God* whom I adore, engages me to become an *advocate* for YOU, *to your own heart*; to *that*, and the scriptures only can I appeal, with any hopes of success.

The *New Testament* is the sacred record of *christianity*: we are *taught*, and most *clearly* informed in that book, that no *fornicator*, *adulterer*, or *unclean person* shall *enter into the kingdom of heaven!* Where then *shall they enter*, for their *souls are immortal*, as well as the *chaste* and *faithful* servants of *God?* They must go to *hell!*—they will perish everlastingly.

Custom may render inquity *familiar* to those who are *hackneyed* in the ways of it, and their hearts may grow *callous*: but they must *see* and *confess* this *terrible* and *tremendous* truth. If they consent to such an abuse of their *reason*, that heaven cries out for *vengeance*; what can they *expect*, but to *suffer* that vengeance; even the *wrath of an offended God*,

" *In bottomless perdition? there to dwell*
" *In adamantine chains and penal fire,*
Most dreadful habitation, fraught with fire
" *Unquenchable: the house of woe and pain,*
" *Rolling for ever in the fiery gulph;*
" *Reserved still for wrath; where the dread thought*
" *Both of lost happiness and lasting pain*
Torments; where LUCIFER, *and his curs'd train*

" *Do witneſs huge affliction and diſmay,*
" *Mix'd with obdurate pride and ſtedfaſt hate:*
" *Viewing, as far as angels ken can reach*
" *The diſmal ſituation, waſte and wild;*
" *A dungeon horrible, on all ſides round,*
" *As one great furnace, flames; yet from thoſe flames*
" *No light, but rather darkneſs viſible,*
" *Serving to diſcover ſights of woe,*
" *Regions of ſorrows, doleful ſhades, where* PEACE
" *And* REST *can never dwell;* HOPE *never comes,*
" *That comes to all; but* TORTURE *without end*
" *Still urges, and a fiery deluge fed*
" *With ever-burning ſulphur unconſumed.*
" *There floods and whirlwinds of tempeſtuous fire,*
Alternate rage with poignant bitter pains
" *Of fierce extremes, extremes by change more fierce!*"

View this *deſcription* with attention!—the poet has drawn it from the ſcriptures: ſtill it conveys but a faint idea of the *torments of hell*; for we are told that we cannot conceive its full extent, more than the tongue can expreſs, or heart conceive, the *tranſporting joys* reſerved for the *juſt*. Perhaps from the nature of our depravity, it is more eaſy to form *ideas of torment*, than it is of bliſs, and it requires a very *religious* turn of mind, to exalt our ſouls to a true idea of *ſpiritual joy*.

In the mean while, nothing can be more familiar to our comprehenſion than this; that if we defile our bodies the *temple of the ſoul*, we ſhall loſe the protection of the *Lord of life*,

life, who has built theſe temples, and whoſe eyes cannot *behold* any *defilement* in them.

If *your mother*, whoſe piety you ſo much commend, will burſt with *indignation*, or expire with the anguiſh of a bleeding heart, if you go aſtray *again*; what do you think will be the *anger* and *reſentment* of the *Great Parent of mankind*, whoſe laws are ſo clear in the point in queſtion? You once had a ſenſe of *generous pride*: look back, and conſider what a *tragic ſcene it is*, to become the victim of the *vicious* deſires of men, with many of whom you once thought it *diſgraceful* even to *exchange* a word. —*Bluſh, O modeſty!*—For heaven's ſake conſider what ſteps you take! Conſider what belongs to yourſelf as a *woman, not devoid of underſtanding*; as a *rational creature*, who conſults the care of her health, and her own preſervation, as to this life: and as an *accountable* Being, what it is to live *for ever* in *bliſs*, or *torment!*

Have you the ſoul of a *Briton?*—Your father, who profeſſed arms, would have ſhed his blood with pleaſure in defence of the *freedom* of his fellow-ſubjects. Will you give up yourſelf, as the moſt *baſe* and *vile* of *ſlaves?* Will you ſubject yourſelf to the moſt *cruel tyranny, and ſell yourſelf to the father of lies, and the prince of darkneſs?*

Do not cheat yourſelf into a *falſe principle*. If no woman can anſwer it to be a *common proſtitute*; can any woman anſwer it to live in a ſtate of proſtitution in any manner? Whether the circumſtances be more or leſs favorable, ſhe is a *mercenary* harlot who proſtitutes herſelf for hire. And ſhe who does it from inclination, cannot plead *po-*

verty, but *inclination* only. Though in the common notion of mankind, in the laſt caſe, the crime is extenuated, it is a great miſtake, unleſs we ſuppoſe that *inclination to vice* is a better excuſe, than *neceſſity* ariſing from *extreme poverty*. Evils of both theſe kinds ſometimes happen, before the offenders are well aware of what they are about; but when they *ſee* them; when they *experience* the *malignant effects*; when their *eyes are opened* to behold their *offences againſt God*; when they are *conſcious* that they are flying from all the *heart-felt joys* of innocence, and all *domeſtic comforts*; if they have any juſt ſenſe of *pleaſure* or *pain*, and think there is a *heaven* or *hell*, is not this conduct *horrible*, even to *madneſs!* O rather wiſh for an *honorable grave*, and *patiently* ſuffer, under the ſeverities of the *hardeſt labor*, than ſubmit to ſuch *crimes*, ſuch indignities, ſuch dreadful puniſhments!

A little *reſolution* to work with your hands, for a *ſupport*, will ſecure you from theſe *mighty evils*. If your heart, as I ſtrongly ſuſpect, leans to your former courſe of life, and yet you *believe in Chriſt*; act as if *your reaſon* had not *quite* forſaken you; conſider what your indiſpenſible obligations, as a *chriſtian*, are; and how you are taught to pray againſt *temptation*.

This world has no terrors to *good minds*: *if you are virtuous, all will be well.* If you appeal to heaven, *God* will be *merciful*: he will certainly be *mindful* of you! — You have often ſeen the *vicious agonizing in diſtreſs* of *body* and *ſoul*; but did you ever ſee the *virtuous forſaken of God?* *Tried* they often are; and *without trial* there can be no

great

great virtue; but they are *never forſaken.* Do not *diſtruſt* the Providence of God! His mercies, and loving kindneſſes, are infinite! Arm your breaſt with *patience*, as with *triple ſteel!* Do your *endevors*, I am ſure you will obtain a *comfortable ſupport*; and as an earneſt of *future joys*, will receive a *preſent conſolation*, which the moſt *ſucceſsful wickedneſs* can *never* give.

Let me therefore ſtill urge you, as your friend, to be *watchful*, not to deceive your own ſoul; nor under any *falſe* and *abſurd* reaſoning, league with the DEVIL *againſt yourſelf.* *Piety* and *induſtry*, with an obliging behavior, will recommend you to your *father*, to a *good huſband*, a *maſter*, or a *miſtreſs*, or a *faithful friend:* and though it ſhould be your lot to act in an humble condition of life, be aſſured from me, and I know what the world is, you will find *comfort* and *eaſe* in *honeſt labor*, and your glaſs will run out with *ſatisfaction.* And what *moments of reſt* can you enjoy, if you receive the *wages of iniquity*, which are *ſure* and *certain* indeed, but it is in the *deſtruction* which they will bring upon you.

Be not *deceived* by any *falſe appearances:* if you think only how to gratify the *pride* and *vanity of your heart*, *at all events*, or to live at *your eaſe* in the world, as if there was no other *Being* but the *preſent*, you cannot ſerve HIM *faithfully* who made the world, and has appointed for us in our different ſtations, ſuch employments as are beſt ſuited to our wants, *and thoſe ſtations. Be dutiful to your Great Parent*; be faithful to the *God of your life*, and

the *Redeemer of your ſoul*, the reſt will follow of courſe; you will *live* and *die* in peace, and moſt aſſuredly be received into thoſe manſions of joy, where *pleaſure* flows for ever in *immortal ſtreams!*

Learn from the *treatment* you have met here, to be kind and merciful to others, upon their repentance, be their *treſpaſſes* ever ſo great. It is upon theſe conditions you aſk *forgiveneſs of* GOD. *See* therefore, and behold the *ſolid*, the *intrinſic worth of chriſtianity*, in the *benevolence* which it excites; in the *reſignation* which it recommends; in the *forgiveneſs* which it enſures; in the *joys* which it promiſes, when we comply with the *conditions of mercy*.

Gratitude for the *compaſſion* ſhown you, when you moſt needed it, and the *preſent indulgence* of your father, call on you in ſuch *perſuaſive* terms, that if you do really turn a deaf ear to all theſe *offers of mercy*, and *fire* ſhould iſſue from the earth to conſume you, though it would be a ſubject of *ſorrow* and *amazement* to all the *chriſtian world*, yet it could not appear but as an *act of divine juſtice*, which *men* and *angels* would approve!

I hope you will think *ſeriouſly* of theſe matters, and not *leave your parents*, who are now ready to receive you, till they are ſatisfied of your being well accommodated in life. You will hardly find many marks of ſuch *zeal*, as you have experienced here: but you may be ſure the *virtuous* part of mankind in general, will always be more *truly*, and more *ſteadily* your friends, than thoſe whoſe *trade is to deceive*, and who deal in *miſery and deſtruction*.

Heaven

Heaven grant that you may *never forſake yourſelf*, and I am confident if you obey GOD he will *never* forſake you! FAREWEL.

Magdalane Houſe, 8*ber* 1759.

The ſtate of the objects of the Magdalane *charity. The opinion of ſome common proſtitutes concerning ſuch as have returned to their former courſe of life, after having been relieved.*

LETTER XXIV.

To the Rev. Mr. N.

I Know the *benignity* of your mind too well to doubt of your good wiſhes, and it is with great pleaſure I can inform you of our ſucceſs. Perhaps you will ſmile when I tell you, that our good *Matron* without the leaſt affectation informed me the other day, with tears in her eyes, that *two* out of *fifteen* girls, who had been honorably diſcharged, and ſeemed determined in their reſolutions, were notwithſtanding *fallen off*. Upon enquiry it was diſcovered that there was previous reaſon to ſuſpect their being unſound at heart. You may perceive how high her ambition runs: indeed many of theſe poor women give very ſincere demonſtrations of a *religious* diſpoſition. And it is greater matter of *wonder*, that *thirteen* ſhould continue ſteady, than that *two* ſhould abandon their principles, or not have reſolution to act up to them. I wiſh the world at large was as pious as this

amounts

amounts to. As to the ſtate of the numbers, upon the whole, you will ſee it by the paper incloſed how it ſtands *.

You are certainly in the right, that there are ſome general marks and characters to which theſe women correſpond; but in their degrees of iniquity, and in the circumſtances of the *evil* which have befallen them, they are as different as *their faces*. When theſe young perſons look back on the groſs *indignities* which they have *ſuffered*, one would think it hardly poſſible that any, who are not as ſtupid as dirt, ſhould entertain a deſign of returning to their old courſe. And yet after all the pains that *can* be taken, we muſt expect that *ſome* of them will forget thoſe *indignities*, and their *duty* at the ſame time, and fondly play with their own *perdition*. But there

* *N. B.* This account being brought ſo low as 31ſt *March* 1761.—291 women have been admitted, of whom 98 are now in the houſe, received at different times in the courſe of near two years; 27 have been reconciled to their parents; 82 placed out in reputable families as domeſtic ſervants; 4 have died; 10 proved lunatic or diſtempered in mind (ſuppoſed to be occaſioned by mercurial phyſic) and ſent to *St. Luke's Hoſpital*, or their proper pariſhes; 9 diſmiſs'd at their own requeſt upon good terms, and a proſpect of being accommodated ſo as to live virtuouſly; 10, ſeemed well inclined, but could not brook the way of living within walls; 41 their conduct proved them unworthy of the charity. Now ſince experience has taught the propereſt means of treating them, and the advantages to be derived from their good behavior, is evident to the meaneſt among them, their conduct is become ſo far unexceptionable, that hardly one has been, or deſerved to be turned out *diſgracefully* for theſe five or ſix months. Such is the force of virtue, and the power of good order!

there is ſomething ſo *horrible* in their *falling off*, that even their *former companions* in wickedneſs expreſs their *deteſtation* of it in the ſtrongeſt terms. I am told lately of ſome converſation on that head, which happened in my neighborhood. Some of the *common* women, ſpeaking of a certain *girl* whom we could not *preſerve*, expreſſed themſelves to this purpoſe, and almoſt in theſe words, "*Could we have it in our power, that is, "could we bring our inclination to repentance, and find pro-"tection from this ſon of perdition, who haunts our paths, "we ſhould never have returned again into this courſe of life, "which this ſilly creature has done, after being delivered "from it. She is a greater ſhame to humanity than we are: "let us hunt her away, as an infectious animal that brings "an accumulated load of infamy on our profeſſion, and de-"ſtroys the only ſhadow of reaſon which remained with us, "why we purſue this way of living.*"

Such is the language of *ſome* of the ſenſible part of theſe unhappy women, now in the ſtreets, even when the light of their minds is ſo far extinguiſhed, that they cannot or will not ſee the *terrible* danger that *ſurrounds them.* But ſtill they *love virtue in the perſons of others*, and this *charity* makes an impreſſion on them.

The declaration which I have juſt mentioned is contrary to the *general received opinion* of ſuch women, but all *wicked* perſons are not equally *fooliſh.* This is *true* in the particular inſtance before us, and clearly demonſtrates how *extremely ſhocking* it is, even to them, for any woman to *pretend* to *piety*, without *repentance.*

Cer-

Certainly thoſe who return to the ſame evil courſe of life, are in a worſe caſe than they were before: but this conſideration chiefly relates to the hearts of individuals; in general we muſt fix our eyes on the *numbers* that are *preſerved*.

If theſe penitents look back with ſorrow and *indignation* on the devices which were once played off to compaſs evil deſigns againſt them; as far as *truth* has more charms than *falſhood*, and the works of *God* are as *pleaſing* and *delightful*, as the works of the Devil are *hideous*, ſo far will every labor in their ſervice awaken their *gratitude*, and call up in their breaſt every thought that is *generous* and worthy of praiſe. Thus they will be as it were *compelled* to continue *ſtedfaſt* in their obedience. They know that after this trial, *rebellion* againſt God will be as the *ſin of witchcraft*, and their oppoſition to the *laws of Chriſt* as kicking at heaven.

Theſe and ſuch *genuine* doctrines are urged, as occaſions offer, and particularly where there is any ſuſpicion of deceitfulneſs. *Generoſity* firſt prevails in the hearts of *ſome*; the *love of God* in *others*: ſome *hope* or ſome *fear* ſtill predominates. Where the *underſtanding* can be come at, the impreſſion will be moſt laſting: but it is *happy* when the *heart* is reached, though it be by means of the *paſſions*. When you conſider this attentively, the *goodneſs of your own heart* will aſſiſt your *underſtanding*; and whatever *refined* doctrines you may hear, you will conſult common ſenſe, and ſincerely wiſh ſuc-

ſucceſs in this pious work, which I truſt, will be to the *honor of God*, for the *happineſs* of thoſe who ſupport it, and for the *ſervice of our country*. I am very ſincerely, yours, *&c.*

General State of the Magdalane *Charity, the Motives to it, and the probable Means of ſupporting it.*

LETTER XXV.

To W— O— *Eſq;*

I Thank you for the hints you have given me. When the world ſees how well this charity is conducted, ſuch perſons of both ſexes, who have the deepeſt ſenſe of human miſery, and without pretending to any *ſuperlative ſanctity*, are moſt deſirous to ſee the *chriſtian religion* become the general law of life, in every circumſtance of it, will aſſiſt in promoting this work. If they *believe* that is done, which is actually performed, in regard to the reformation of theſe unhappy women, I hope they will not be able to *reſiſt* giving us ſome marks of their approbation. The undertaking *pleads for itſelf*; but few perſons are ſo very charitably inclined as to give liberally, *unaſked*. This is hardly in the nature of the human mind: for when a deſign is explained to us ſatisfactorily, by perſons whom we *eſteem*, and whoſe *probity* we have no doubt of, it naturally affords ſtronger motives to *give*, than when only common fame makes a fair report. Very few things are accompliſhed without

labor

labor and *attention*; but as there never was an undertaking, which fell-in more with the united force of the *piety* and *humanity* of this nation, it would be hardly juſt to ſuppoſe, that our fellow-ſubjects will overlook it. Of this however I am well perſuaded, that if it is not ſupported by thoſe who think of its *intrinſic merit*, the *novelty* of the thing, or the efficacy of *faſhion*, will not maintain it.

Where the greateſt *real miſery is*, there the *greateſt fraud* and *artifice* are often *ſuſpected*; and it can hardly be otherwiſe, whilſt ſo many wear the *garb of miſery*, and *practiſe* on the humanity of the unwary. But in this caſe the very act of ſubmitting to *work*, and deſiring to *pray*, and to lead a ſober life, imply diſtreſs of *mind* as well as *body*. If it is ſuppoſed that any of theſe objects are *ſincere* towards *God*, yet totally *friendleſs*, or forſaken by mankind; willing to *work* for their bread, yet *naked or in rags*, and known to no mortal upon earth, but ſuch as are as *miſerable* as themſelves, or the partners of their iniquitous lives. If ſuch perſons are ſuppoſed to exiſt; and, alas! we know that there are many ſuch, they are ſurely intitled to *pity* and *relief*.

No tongue can deſcribe the complicated miſery of ſome of theſe *wretched Beings*. What the poet ſays of a *woman in diſtreſs*, who is the object only of *vulgar attention*, is particularly applicable to theſe women. Even thoſe who are ſuppoſed to have leaſt feeling, may properly be ſaid, to

" *Kindly*

" *Kindly look up and at her griefs grow ſad,*
" *As if they catch'd the ſorrows that fell from her.*
" *Even the lewd rabble, that gather round*
" *To ſee the fight, ſtand mute when they behold her,*
" *Govern their roaring throats, and grumble pity.*"

Humanity in the breaſt of a *Pagan* would plead for *a woman in ſuch diſtreſs*, as we ſometimes ſee theſe. Tho' ſome of them ſhould not be ſenſible of the degree of their own wretchedneſs, or ſhould even be ſuſpected of ſome degree of artifice, yet upon the whole, if *appearances* make for them, it is a crime to be *ſevere*.

How often have I, with an aching heart, beheld many miſerable objects, even among thoſe who were not thought proper for the charity, or who could not be *received* conſiſtently with the expence created by great numbers, *caſting about*, what they are to do, *without characters*, *without cloaths*, *without money!*

" *Their boſoms lab'ring with a boding ſigh*
" *Whilſt the big tear ſtood trembling in their eye!*"

In theſe circumſtances humanity claims more than a *common tribute*; and the *politer* part of mankind, whoſe *ſenſibility* is ſo much greater than that of the rabble, and who beſt underſtand what they owe to our *common parent*; and the reverence due to the divine precepts, delivered by the *Son of God himſelf*, or the pens of his immediate friends and followers; we cannot *ſhut our eyes* nor *ſtop our ears*.

ears. The *pleadings* of ſuch as we believe to be *wretched*, merely as they are *human creatures*, have a title to be heard. —But if, upon the moſt proper examination, there are grounds to think, that they are very *ſincere*, in profeſſing a deſire to return to their *obedience* to our *common parent, and their offended God*, and there is a *means of receiving them*, the ſoul of the *chriſtian*, and the *heart of the man*, become advocates for them; and we are compelled to do all we can, to afford them ſuccor on *earth*, in order to their making their *peace with heaven.*

With reſpect to your *enquiry*, how theſe women are diſpoſed of, after they have given proof of their piety and ability to be truſted with themſelves in the world; very much indeed hangs on this point. The objection of "*our having them always to keep*," is founded in a miſtake, by the numbers already happily placed out in the world: but the queſtion is not therefore the leſs conſiſtent; and though we muſt not refine too much on events, due regard is to be had when they are *taken in*, how they may be probably ſent *out again*, and I will tell you how this matter ſtands.

The *firſt* means of diſpoſing of them, is by their *reconciliations to their parents and friends.* Their induſtry, joined to their ſincere repentance, contributing very much to their obtaining ſuch reconciliation, at the ſame time that it bids fair to lead them into a proper train of life.

The *ſecond* method is by *domeſtic ſervice*, as *cooks, nurſery* and *houſe maids*; and ſome in higher ſtations, according to their capacities. And here experience already proves,

proves, that ſome *good ladies* and *gentlewomen*, from their previous knowledge of theſe girls, eſpecially ſuch of them as have formerly lived in reputable families, or from regard for their relations, will take them as *ſervants*. They are kept in *conſtant practice*, in order to be qualified for *ſervice*, and many perſons *enquire* at the houſe, for *ſervants*. As the behaviour of the party, recommended by the *Matron*, is fairly known, theſe women are taken, on a preſumption that they will acquit themſelves as *good chriſtians*, as well as capable of diſcharging the office they undertake; and there are now many *maſters* and *miſtreſſes* who have the utmoſt reaſon to be pleaſed with their *choice*. Some take theſe women as ſervants from mere *piety* and *goodneſs of heart*, thinking it a diſgrace to *religion* and *human nature*, that their fellow-creatures who have once gone aſtray, ſhould be therefore, for *ever*, rejected.

Here is a fair opportunity of ſhowing what kind of *heads*, or *hearts* we have, and how we ſtand affected towards the *great duty of chriſtianity*, in *forgiving the treſpaſſes* of others, as we hope our own, though differing in circumſtances, may be *forgiven*: for ſurely no kind of *forgiveneſs* deſerves the name ſo well, as that which leads us to *receive* and ſuccor the *penitent* and *diſtreſſed*.

As to reconciling theſe women to thoſe whom they have offended; ſome of them, you may imagine, have no parents nor *relations* to be reconciled to; nor any *friend* to avail themſelves of, but ſuch as *heaven* has ſent them in the *Magdalane Houſe*. Many of theſe young

young women being very *poor*, and having loſt their parents when they were very young, were for that very reaſon expoſed to the *diſtreſs*, which induced them to take ſhelter within the walls of this *houſe*.

You ſuppoſe that common ſervitude will not ſuit the *temper*, *inclination*, or even the *health* of every one of them: it may be ſo; but *neceſſity has no law*, and the *love of God*, when *ſincere*, will lead them to ſuch ſubmiſſions as appear *neceſſary* to the preſervation of their *virtue*: *in general* we find, that thoſe think themſelves happy who can *get good places*.

There may be among them, as you obſerve, ſome very ingenious girls; but *needle work* can afford comfortable bread only to the *few*, who are uncommonly *induſtrious* as well as *ingenious*. You need not be afraid, that *piety* will out-run our *judgment*, or lead us into any *romantic* opinions. *Some of theſe women*, I do verily believe, would *die* with hunger, rather than *again* forſake the *paths of virtue*: but you may perceive, that it is not *intended* to put them on any ſuch *deſperate trials*.

In addition to the ſeveral methods already mentioned, the gentlemen who conduct this charity have often meditated the introducing one or more *beneficial manufactures*, the gain of which to be employed in ſupport of the houſe, reſerving a portion of it for the uſe of thoſe who may be the ableſt proficients, in the ſame manner as now practiſed with regard to their *needle work*. In this ſome few might arrive at a proficiency, and be put in a capacity of gaining more than in common needle work: but

every

every thing cannot be done at once. If any ſmall number of them can be thus taught, as in a ſchool, and find the means of a decent ſupport, it will be ſo far a happy circumſtance, as they may the more eaſily marry and ſettle in life. It is a *great recommendation* to any woman, if ſhe can earn her own *bread* as a manufacturer, as in fact ſhe brings a fortune with her to a huſband, and will be in ſo much the fairer way of breeding up children *to ſerve God*, and become *uſeful ſubjects*. But I apprehend that *domeſtic ſervice* will be the principal object for the major part of theſe women; and I hope in whatever ſtation they are, they will live comfortably to *old age*, and *die in peace*.

Whatever methods are taken, you may reſt aſſured, that the gentlemen concerned in this affair will adopt *one general principle*, that *induſtry* muſt keep pace with *piety*. This charity depends on the benevolence of our *fellow-ſubjects*, who differ in temper and *apprehenſion*. We are a *commercial*, *ſagacious* people, and underſtand what human nature is, as well as moſt others in the world: but for the ſame reaſon that our minds are *ſtrong*, we are apt to go into *extremes*. The *higheſt pitch of piety that* human nature is capable of, cannot, from the ſituation of mankind, be the lot of great numbers: and it is not ſo *wonderful* as *lamentable*, that we ſee it ſo often *halting*, and either *falling much ſhort of the object* which heaven has put within the reach of *common mortals*, or *zealouſly* preſſing forward, and injudiciouſly *overſhooting* the mark. It has been well obſerved, that in the ſame degree *enthuſiaſm takes*

poſſeſſion of the mind, true religion forſakes it: and yet there is a certain warmth, often called *enthuſiaſm*, without which the flame of *heavenly love* trembles, as if the lamp were *expiring*. The *peculiar characteriſtic of the charity in queſtion, is goodneſs*; and the piety it includes ſeems to go beyond that of *any other*, however well regulated. As in the world at large, ſo in conſidering this object, *he* has the moſt regard to the welfare of the community, who, not forgetting that he is a ſojourner in this world, contemplates the *tempers* and *diſpoſitions* of mankind, as well as their *virtues*; and by a *ſkilful*, no leſs than an *upright* conduct, converts them to the great ends of happineſs. We may alſo trace out the beautiful order of things, by obſerving how *compaſſion* is inſtrumental to the *exerciſe of reaſon*; and how often it does that, which *reaſon* alone had no proſpect of accompliſhing.

If I comprehend this matter right, application to *uſeful purſuits*, and ſuch as the world ſees the *fruits* of, will give higher impreſſions of the integrity of the heart, which God only can know, than pretenſions to the moſt exalted piety, though there ſhould be the *appearances* of ſuch piety: and the more ſubſtantial the *ſanctity* is, the leſs *noiſe* it will make. The promotion of *induſtry* and *piety*, rendering each inſtrumental to the ſupport of the other, will prevent the *thoughtleſs* and the *jealous*, the *politician*, and the *ſaint*, from ſtarting objections: for whilſt it weakens the force of the moſt diſtant imputation, that the deſign is too *good to laſt*, it will ſecure ſuch a portion of

un-

unexceptionable *righteouſneſs*, as will render it *good enough to laſt*, and ſupport the *dignity* and propriety of the original intention. The favor of every rank and order of the people, who are zealous for the *honor of God*, or the *welfare* of their country, may be thus engaged; and the *charity* fixed on the moſt *permanent baſis*.

As to the danger there may be hereafter, ſuppoſing that we ſhould eſtabliſh any *manufactures*, in which it will be neceſſary for women to work in company *, it is probable they will be able to aſſociate with *ſober company, if they pleaſe*. In *domeſtic ſervice*, there are *no places* without ſome *danger*; and can it be ſuppoſed that the *lonely ſempſtreſs* is not ſubject to be haunted by *evil ſpirits* in the ſhape of *men?* If theſe women are not well fortified *with religion*, and prudent to keep danger at *arm's length*, we may eaſily foretell, that many of them will fall from the glory of their *repentance*. But if they lay in ſuch a ſtock of *common ſenſe*, as well as *piety*, as may naturally be expected of thoſe who *really* mean to *repent* of their ſins, they will *ſhun and avoid danger*, and remain *as free from it*, as any other part of mankind can do, let the ſtation they are in, be what it may. They will do well, however, to keep their own *counſel*; and where they cannot *conceal their ſtory* without *falſhood*, they ſhould not think a *profeſſed repentance* a reproach; but a ſtrong tie upon them, in the eyes of *men*, as well as in the *ſight*

* In making a carpet, for inſtance, where ſeveral work at the ſame loom, they may perchance be *all* women, or huſband and wife: and ſmall carpets require but one hand to work on them.

of God; and their behavior ſhould be ſuitable to it. On the other hand, ſhe who boaſts of having been in the *Magdalane Houſe*, muſt conclude that other people will think ſhe deſires to be eſteemed no better than when ſhe firſt went thither; there is a great difference between telling a lie to conceal a fact, and wantonly divulging of it. The *pious* and the *prudent* will know how to deport themſelves according to the circumſtances they are in; and as for others, who have no *piety* nor *prudence*, admonition can be but of little value.—Indeed, Sir, I believe that *many* will find their way to *earthly* and *heavenly* happineſs, by the means of this charity, who would have enjoyed neither without it; and that is ſaying a great deal for the *inſtitution*.

Incloſed I ſend you the *meditations* I mentioned. Some ſerious reflections relating to the object in queſtion, joined to the *public devotion*, laid the foundation of theſe *private* thoughts. We ought always to keep alive the *love of our country*, in what the *heart* feels, as well as in what the *head* apprehends. Many individuals conſtitute the whole; and every private perſon is of great conſequence to himſelf. In both views we ſtand in need of *help from God*; but nothing can raiſe the ſoul to a due ſenſe of our dependance on him, more than the devaſtations created by *fire* and *ſword*. Let *victory* declare for one ſide or the other, *miſery* follows cloſe at her heels; and the *earth* loſes her inhabitants. Heaven has been very indulgent to this nation hitherto: I hope we ſhall have *piety*, *military virtue*, and *political ſteadineſs*, enough to ſecure a *good peace!* FAREWEL.

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DEVOTIONAL MEDITATIONS.

I.

In acknowledgement of Mercies paſt, and for future Mercies.

O *Lord God of my life*, who haſt ſo often preſerved me, under thy chaſtiſements; withdraw not thy protection from me! I lifted up my ſupplications from the earth, and prayed for deliverance from *dangers* and *death*, and thou haſt wonderfully preſerved me. I will think upon thy mercies, *O Lord*, and, from the depths of my ſoul, confeſs my *tranſgreſſions* before thee! O *deliver* me from all *outward* evils, and from my own *propenſity* to wickedneſs; and make me not a reproach unto my own heart! According to the *multitude* of thy mercies, and the *greatneſs* of thy name, conſider my meditations. Keep me, O LORD, from preſumptuous offences, and let them not get the dominion over me. Guard my heart from the ſins which moſt eaſily beſet me, and heal the diſeaſes of my mind, that I may never ſwerve from my obedience to thee, nor my heart be eſtranged from thy love. And however it ſhall pleaſe thee, to diſpoſe of the *remainder* of my days, O give me *thy aid*, that I may ſtretch forth my hands towards thy *heaven of heavens*, and duly lamenting my ſins and infirmities, obtain thy pardon! Give me a *heart* to love thee, O LORD, *with all my ſoul*,

and with all my ſtrength. Teach me to diſcern the *happineſs* of ſerving thee, whatever *temporal* evils ſhall befall me; and withhold from me whatever is *hurtful*, tho' it ſhould be ſtampt with all the marks of *earthly felicity*. Give me *temperance* and *fortitude* under all temptations, and let the afflictions of my *life*, ſerve to render my *death* the more glorious. This I beg, *O Father of mercy*, for the ſake of *his* ſufferings, who died to redeem the world!

2.

On Death.

O LORD, *the reſurrection and the life*, in whom, whoſoever truſteth ſhall never ſuffer *eternal death*, I behold my days paſſing away like a *ſhadow*, and am ſenſible of my approaches to the *grave:* ſhed thy influence on my heart, that I may improve every moment of my life, and recover the precious time which I have loſt! Inſtruct me, *O God of wiſdom*, how to prepare my ſpirit for that dread hour, when I ſhall appear before thy judgment-ſeat! *Full of the hopes of a bliſsful immortality*, let me live *prepared* for death; and rather *deſire*, than *fear* my *diſſolution*. Thy *eternal decree* is paſt, and it is appointed to man *once to die*; O teach me to meet the *king of terrors* without *diſmay:* Teach me to receive him as a *welcome meſſenger*, that whether *early* or *late*, I may *joyfully obey thy ſummons*.

Grant me, O LORD, to *triumph* in the thought, of being delivered from the poſſibility of offending thee.—Give me reſolution to look forward beyond the grave,

and

and to behold, with an equal mind, all the *fleeting* joys, and *tranſient* miſeries of the preſent life. — And thou, *O bleſſed Redeemer of the world*, who didſt pay the *ranſom* for *repenting ſinners*, and breakeſt the *ſhackles of mortality*, *direct* my ſteps to the manſions of thy eternal glory, and bring me *with joy* into the preſence of my Father and my God!

3.

On my Enemies and Reproachers.

O Lord, the God of my fathers, thou *never-failing friend* to thy faithful ſervants! ſave me from them that *ſecretly* revile me; and deliver me from thoſe whoſe tongues are whet with *bitter* words! Ariſe up for me in the judgment which thou haſt commanded, and be my *helper* and *defender*. Conſider the troubles which I have ſuffered, from the *injuſtice* of other men; and from ſuch as ſet themſelves againſt me. Forgive *their tranſgreſſions*, O LORD, and let not thine indignation be armed againſt them. Give them a right mind, that they may know the *truth*, and ſeek for thy *pardon*. Let *innocence*, *ſimplicity* and *reſignation* reign in my heart, and grant me ſuch a meaſure of thy *grace*, that I may do *them* GOOD, for the INJURIES which they have done to me, and pray for their *peace*, in the name, and thro' the mediation of the *meek* and *bleſſed Jeſus*, my Saviour and Redeemer!

4.

On Liberty, and the Humanity connected with it.

O LORD OMNIPOTENT, *Father and Protector of men*, beſeech thee, give me *underſtanding* that I may know thy

will, and vindicate the freedom of mankind. Give me *courage* to maintain, and *tenderneſs* to plead the cauſe of the *poor* and the *diſtreſſed*. Let a *due ſenſe of juſtice* keep me from all offences againſt the *rights of human nature*: and if it ſhould pleaſe thy Providence to call me forth, grant that I may be *ready*, and *willing* to offer up my life to thee, in *defence* of my fellow-ſubjects, that whilſt they obſerve their duty to *their ſuperiors*, no tyrannical practices may violate that *equity*, which thou haſt ordained; nor any injurious cuſtoms deface thy image on our minds. This I beg, *O Lord*, for the ſake of thy *glorious Son*, who dignified the *nature* of man, by taking it on himſelf, and at length *died*, that he might ſave the world from *ſlavery*, and eternal death!

5.

On national Bleſſings.

O Lord and Sovereign of the univerſe, who in the bountiful operations of thy Providence haſt ſelected, where the glories of this world ſhall ſhine with the moſt *diſtinguiſhed luſtre*; I beſeech thee to continue thy bounties to us, who have received ſo many *great*, ſo many *ſignal* marks of thy *mercy* and *loving kindneſs!* Reward thoſe, *O Lord*, who worſhip *thee*; and let all the inhabitants of theſe kingdoms be found *faithful* in thy ſight. Lift up thine arm againſt them who meditate *evil things*; and let thy *peace* reſt upon thoſe that love thy name! Give us *fruitful fields*, and let our *vallies* rejoice in *plenty*: yet ſuffer us not to be intoxicated with *eaſe*, nor lulled into

any

any *falſe ſecurity*. Let *temperance* and *humanity*, *benevolence* and *charity*, and above all the *conſtant fear of thee*, be the ruling principle of our actions, that *good order*, and *true religion* may *abound* amongſt us. Stretch forth thy mighty arm, *O Lord*, to ſuccor and preſerve all ſuch *charitable inſtitutions*, as are productive of happineſs to individuals, and benefit to the *community*; and give me patience and perſeverence, tenderneſs and zeal, to diſcharge *my* duty as a *member* of it.—This I beg, O Father of *mercies*, for the ſake of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Maker and Redeemer of the world!

6.

On national Peace.

RETURN, *O mighty Lord of hoſts! Return*, and viſit us with thy ſalvation! Extend thy *particular providences* and relieve the *bleeding earth!* O gracious *Redeemer*, who haſt *overcome* the world, and ſubjected *Satan* to thy dominion, inſpire the minds of princes with a true ſenſe of *humanity*, and a ſtrict obedience to thy laws! Give them wiſdom to make choice of miniſters, whoſe councils may obtain, and whoſe prudence may *preſerve peace* in the earth; and let their devices be directed to the *advancement of virtue*, and the *ſolid happineſs* of mankind. Give *us*, *O Lord*, the felicity which thou haſt promiſed to thy ſervants, that we may rejoice under the ſhadow of thy *mercies*, and bleſs *thy name* for ever!

7.

On the Proſperity of our Commerce and civil Government.

O LORD GOD, *the fountain of all knowledge*, who haſt given to man the powers of *invention*, and *inclination to ſocial intercourſe*, I beſeech thee to lead this nation to the knowledge of every ſcience beneficial to mankind, that our *com-*

merce

mercy may reach to the remoteſt regions of the earth. Let the ſun be always ſhining upon ſome of us, and keep us *all* in mind of thy preſence, and the brightneſs of thy *ineffable glory*. Let *juſtice* and *equity* be the rule and guide of our actions, that all nations may *behold* the wonders which thou haſt wrought in us; and all that dwell upon the earth, *know* that thou art the *eternal God*, who *humbleſt* one, and *ſetteſt* up another. Purify our *affections*, and enlarge our minds, that *riches* may not *deceive* us, nor evil deſires grow up in our hearts, to choak our love of thee! Let *gratitude* for thy numberleſs mercies exalt our ſouls; and *benignity* to each other, render our wealth a common bleſſing; that *piety* and *induſtry* may unite in promoting thy cauſe, and the *glory of theſe times* be recorded to *all ſucceeding generations!* O LORD, in mercy forgive the *tranſgreſſions* of thy *people*; and grant unto our *rulers* a ſpirit to puniſh the *wicked*, and to cheriſh and protect the *righteous*; that *their example* may be a monument of thy *grace* and *heavenly benediction*; and both *prince* and *people* lift up their hearts to thee, through *Jeſus Chriſt* the *mighty Lord of life, and Redeemer of mankind!*

8.

For Defence in War, and national Advantages.

O Lord God of hoſts, at whoſe frowns all nature trembles, who *increaſeth* the nations, or *deſtroyeth* them; and in whoſe ſight the *greateſt potentates* are but *duſt* and *aſhes*; have mercy upon *us*, and ſend thy *fear* upon all the earth! —*Save, and defend my country!*— O *ſave*, and *deliver* her from her enemies, and from her own manifold tranſgreſſions; that with *one common voice*, we may ſend up our

prayers

prayers to thee! With thy *right-hand*, and with thy *mighty* arm thou haſt defended us for *ages paſt*; *ſhield* and *protect* us, O LORD, till *time* ſhall be no more! Give us a due ſenſe of our *diſtinguiſhed happineſs*, that being defended by the *waters* that ſurround us, *we may always rejoice in ſafety*; and protected by ſo *admirable* a *form* of government, pay all due obedience to it; and preſerve the *purity* of thy *holy religion*, as taught by the *great prieſt* and *prophet* of the world! Thus guarded by thy care, let us with *upright minds* adore thy goodneſs and obey thy laws, through the mediation of thy dear Son, to whom with thee, and the Holy Ghoſt, one eternal, incomprehenſible GOD, all power and dominion, honor and glory, and happineſs, be aſcribed, through the endleſs ages of eternity!

9.

For the ſame.

O God omnipotent, who ſtilleſt the *rage of princes*, and turneſt their hearts as ſeemeſt beſt in thine eyes; though many and mighty nations be *gathered together* in heaps, let them be broken in *pieces*, and their councils brought to nought; for the *decrees* which they pronounce ſhall not ſtand againſt *thee*, *O Lord!* Make them afraid, and conſume their *boldneſs* and ſtrength, that they may be aſtoniſhed at their own defeat. Be thou ever *with us*, O Lord, by ſea and land, and caſt them down by the ſword of thoſe that love thy name. And if it be thy pleaſure, may a ſpeedy period be put to this war,

that

that the *widow* and the *orphan* may dry their tears, and peace be ſecured to us, that our blood may not be ſpilt in vain!

Extend thy compaſſion to our *enemies*. Humble their aſpiring minds, as ſeemeth good in thy ſight, that the *earth may enjoy repoſe*, and all its inhabitants offer up continual praiſes and adoration to thy name, through the mediation of thy dear Son, *the mighty Prince and Redeemer of the world!*

10.

In Remembrance of the Battle of Minden.

O LORD GOD OF HOSTS, ſtretch forth thy mighty arm, that we may reſiſt our enemies like a wall of braſs: and follow and overtake them, till they ſhall be *diſperſed!* Gird us with ſtrength unto the battle, that our adverſaries may fall under our feet. Level their bulwarks, O LORD, and conſume their *magazines* with fire, that they may know that thou art *God*, and that thou wilt be exalted above the earth! Spread the wings of thy mercies, and protect the cauſe we eſpouſe; and the lands where thou art truly worſhipped; that the ambitious aſpiring temper of our *neighbor nation* may be curbed, and theſe kingdoms enjoy ſafety, and *uninterrupted peace*. Give us thy *bleſſing*, O LORD, that we may *know*, and *fear*, and *worſhip* thee, through *Jeſus Chriſt*, the mighty Prince and Redeemer of the world!

11.

11.

On the taking of Quebec.

O Lord, how wonderful are thy mercies to us! Thou haſt ſubdued the enemies of my country, and ſcattered our foes! Thou haſt given us up their lands, that they may no longer diſturb our repoſe! Let the *heavens rejoice*, and the *earth be glad*; for thou haſt given victory to thoſe who ſeek *thy glory*, *thy worſhip*, *and renown!* O continue to inſpire the leaders of our fleets and armies with that *benevolence* and *wiſdom*, that *fortitude* and *contempt* of death, which has ſhone forth in thoſe who fell ſo bravely on this great occaſion! Give my fellow-ſubjects, *O Lord*, ſuch a due ſenſe of thy mercies, that our *humility* may increaſe with our *victories*, and all our ſucceſs in war be referred to thy glory, and promote peace on earth, through Jeſus Chriſt our Lord!

12.

On the Defeat of the French *Fleet* *.

O Lord eternal, thou mighty God of hoſts, and giver of victory! I pour out my ſoul in gratitude for theſe repeated inſtances of thy mercies, in that thou haſt vanquiſhed and ſubdued the foes of my country; and by defeating their deſigns, delivered us from great and imminent danger. *Thou art the Saviour of nations!* If thou guardeſt us not, the

* In *Auguſt* 1759 by admiral *Boſcawen* off *Lagos*. This *French* fleet was commanded by *De la Clue*, and ſuppoſed to be bound to *Breſt*, to join another large fleet, to convoy an army to invade *Ireland*, or attack *Jamaica*.

the moſt vigilant will wake in vain! But *thy hand*, and the mighty ſtrength of *thine arm*, have confounded the devices of our enemies. Neither their *crafty wilineſs*, nor the pavilion of darkneſs that ſurrounded them, could fruſtrate the vigilance of thy ſervants. *Thou art the hope of the ends of the earth, and of them that go upon the broad ſea.* Defend us, O Lord, for ever, for Jeſus Chriſt his ſake!

13.

In Remembrance of the Defeat of the French *Fleet off* Belleiſle.

O *God* of hoſt, *Father*, and *Lord* of heaven and earth, ſtill do'ſt thou give us victory and renown! Thou haſt delivered theſe dominions from the dangers that threatened them! Help us, O Lord, in all perils; and let generations to come, ſo fear to offend thee, that they may never be afraid of their enemies! Thus let their devices be brought to nought. Let neither darkneſs, nor the tempeſtuous billows, nor all the dangers of rocks, defend them from thy ſtretched-out arm, and the vigilance of thy faithful ſervants. O Lord, how excellent is thy name in all the world! Where ſhall our praiſes and our wonder ceaſe! Thou art God from everlaſting! O grant that we may ſerve thee in true holineſs on earth, that we may live with thee for ever in thy kingdom in heaven, through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt!

14.

For the Officers and Men in the Field, and on Expeditions.

O almighty Lord, and Father of the children of men, whoſe providence reigns in peace and war, I beſeech thee grant to all the commanders who go forth to battle, in the ſervice of this nation, ſuch a meaſure of thy heavenly benediction, that their councils may be directed with *wiſdom* and *fortitude!* Make them *ſecret* and *vigilant* in all their *deſigns*; *manly* and *intrepid* in *execution*. Give thine angels charge over thoſe, who act under them, and protect them all, with thy power and mercy, againſt the rigor of the ſeaſons, and the complicated diſtreſſes of war. Bring them all home with *honor* to the nation; *contentment* to the KING, and ſatisfaction to the ſtate; that the end of their *expeditions* may be a *happy*, and a *laſting peace*, and the renown of their arms fix a period to theſe bloody deſtructions. Keep all nations in tranquility, O Lord, and let all our hoſts ſeek the light of thy countenance, and the protection of thy mighty arm; that with one common voice they may ſend up their prayers to thee, and *live* as become thy *faithful ſoldiers and ſervants* to the end of their days! This, O LORD, I beg, for the ſake of *Jeſus Chriſt*, the Prince of peace, and Redeemer of the world!

15.

In Thankſgiving for Victory over our Enemies in general.

O Lord God, thou art *king* from everlaſting ages! O ſend help unto thy ſervants, that through thee we may

overthrow our enemies, and in thy name tread them under that riſe up againſt us! Yet not unto us, not unto *our arms*, O LORD, be aſcribed our ſucceſſes in war: for it is *thou* that ſaveſt us, and putteſt them to confuſion that hate us. Of *thee*, *O God*, let us make our *boaſt*; let us praiſe thy name, and tell of all the wonders which thou haſt wrought. Thou haſt given us *victory*, as a token of thy *favor*, that ſuch as fear thee may *triumph* and rejoice in thy *rightcouſneſs* and *truth!* Thou haſt delivered us with thy *right-hand*; and through thy mighty arm, *O God*, have we done *great acts*, that our enemies may confeſs that *thou art God alone!* O teach me for ever to *praiſe* and adore thy name, for this and all thy mercies to my country, through *Jeſus Chriſt* my bleſſed Lord and Saviour!

16.

For the Reſtoration of Peace.

GLORY *in the higheſt be unto thee*, O FATHER OMNIPOTENT! Let *peace* reign for ever! Extend thy mercies, *O Lord*, to *all* the *children of men*, that *reaſon* and *juſtice* may decide their quarrels, under the *mighty* banners of the *Prince of peace*. Let the remembrance of his *holy life* and *meritorious death*, influence the *minds* of all the *chriſtian world*, that *wars* may ceaſe from the earth! *O eternal God*, whoſe *power* no creature can reſiſt, to whom it belongeth to puniſh the *ſins* of *nations*, *mercifully withhold thy vengeance from ours*. Ariſe and viſit us with thy ſalvation; give us *peace*, O Lord, and grant that we may


In remembrance of the many Victories obtained over our Enemies.

may live ſo on *earth*, as finally to be received into thy kingdom in heaven, for *Jeſus Chriſt* his ſake!

17.

In Remembrance of the Death of the late King, and the Acceſſion of his preſent Majeſty.

O Lord God of hoſts, thou mighty legiſlator of the univerſe, look down from the glories of thy throne on this nation! Let us adore thy goodneſs, for the length of days of our late Sovereign, and the *clemency* and *moderation* with which he hath ruled over us; and for all the *wealth* and *tranquility*, the *honor* and *renown* which we enjoy. Thine, *O Lord*, is the greatneſs, and the power; the glory, the victory, and the majeſty: for all that is in heaven and earth is thine; and thou reigneſt over all. O continue thy bleſſings to us in the perſon of our preſent *Monarch!* Magnify him, O LORD, in the ſight of all his people; and be graciouſly pleaſed to inſpire him with a true ſenſe of the weighty charge of a crown, that he may be *ſteady* in his *purſuit of virtue*. Enrich his mind with *knowledge* and *wiſdom*; and inſpire his heart with the moſt *exalted* love of thee, that he may execute thy will in all things, and worſhip, *with fear*, before thy throne! Give him length of days, and uninterrupted felicity in *peace* and *war*, that in every ſtate and condition, which thy wiſdom ſhall ordain, he may, with *purity* and *ſingleneſs of heart*, obey thy righteous laws, through the merits and mediation of our Great Lord and Saviour, the mighty Prince and Redeemer of the world!

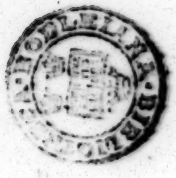
18.

On the King and Nation in general.

O merciful God, and almighty Ruler of univerſal Being, who haſt anointed thy ſervant to be our *king*; protect him, *O Lord*, againſt the *enemy of mankind*, that dwelling under thy defence, he may abide under thy ſhadow! Be thou ever his *hope* and ſtrong hold, and exalt his renown, that all the nations of the earth may confeſs his glory! Let thy *faithfulneſs* and *truth* be his ſhield and buckler; and give thine angels charge over him, to guide him in all thy ways! Give him grace to ſerve thee with *awe*, that he may rule his people with *wiſdom*; and they knowing what belongs to their *preſent* and *everlaſting* peace, may ſo regulate their deſires, that the riches and induſtry of individuals may be directed to their *proper objects*, and promote the ſafety and happineſs of the ſtate. Let *clemency* and *benevolence*, *juſtice* and *mercy* ſurround his throne, and direct his councils; that *corruption* may be rooted up, and no falſe refinements in politics injure the morals of his ſubjects, or prevent the true ends of government. Let his example ſhine forth as the ſun in his meridian brightneſs, and ſo influence the manners of his people, that we may grow up in virtue and true religion, and be rendered acceptable in thy ſight, *O Lord of righteouſneſs, and ſun of eternal glory!*—and finally by thy mercy our ſins and iniquities be done away.—Let his example extend to all generations, that his reign may likewiſe influence the conduct of *future kings*, and generations yet unborn

bleſs


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bleſs the glory of his time. Preſerve his *family* and *ſervants*; and protect the *Lords* and *Commons* of this land. And I beſeech thee, *O gracious* GOD, to ſhower down thy choiceſt bleſſings on the *Biſhops* and the *Clergy*, and all ſchools and ſeminaries of true learning, that thy goſpel may be diligently taught amongſt us, and thy *true worſhip* eſtabliſhed in all our hearts. Grant the KING to live *happy*, in thy fear, and under thy protection, to the utmoſt period of human age; and when his time ſhall come, let him *die* in thy *favor*; *reſt* in thy *peace*; and *reign* for ever in thy *glory!* — This I beg with *uplifted hands*, *O merciful and tender Father*, through the *interceſſion*, and for the ſake of thy *dear Son*, who died to *reform*, and to *redeem* the world!

Now that I have given you this opportunity of animadverting on theſe *pious patriotic thoughts*, I cannot help recommending to you an attentive *ſtudy* of the majeſtic beauty and ſimplicity of our liturgy; not as ſuited to the *public worſhip* only, but alſo for private uſe. The *prayers* contained in it, ſeem to be adapted to all circumſtances, and fit for the *peaſant* or the *noble*; intelligible to a *child*, and yet with ſenſe worthy the acuteſt *chriſtian philoſopher*. Perhaps you will find ſome ſuperior; theſe which I ſend you, being almoſt the firſt I caſt my eyes upon.

1.

For a good Life in general.

O almighty Lord and *everlaſting God*, vouchſafe I beſeech thee to direct, ſanctify, and govern both my heart and body, in the ways of thy laws, and in the works of thy commandments: that through thy moſt mighty protection, both here and ever, I may be preſerved in *body* and *ſoul*, thro' my Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt*. *Amen*.

2.

For divine Aſſiſtance.

O almighty God, the Fountain of all wiſdom, who knoweſt my neceſſities before I aſk, and my ignorance in aſking: I beſeech thee to have compaſſion upon my infirmities; and thoſe things, which for my unworthineſs I *dare* not, and for my blindneſs I *cannot* aſk, vouchſafe to give me, for the worthineſs of thy Son *Jeſus Chriſt my Saviour*. *Amen*.

3.

For religious Courage.

O God, who art the author of *peace*, and lover of *concord*, in knowledge of whom ſtandeth my *eternal life*, whoſe ſervice is perfect freedom: defend me, thy humble ſervant, in all aſſaults of my enemies; that ſurely truſting in thy defence, I may not fear the power of any adverſary, through the might of *Jeſus Chriſt my Saviour*. Amen.

4.

4.

For the Morning.

O Lord my heavenly Father, almighty and everlaſting God, who haſt ſafely brought me to the beginning of this day! defend me in the ſame by thy mighty power; and grant that this day I may not fall into any ſin, neither run into any kind of danger; but that all my doings may be ordered by thy governance, to do always that is righteous in thy ſight, through my bleſſed Lord and Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt.* Amen.

5.

For the Evening.

Lighten my darkneſs, I beſeech thee, *O Lord,* and by thy great mercy defend me from all perils and dangers of this night, for the love of thy only Son, my Saviour *Jeſus Chriſt.* Amen.

But of all forms, that which we call the *Lord's Prayer* is the moſt majeſtically ſimple, ſuited to all conditions and capacities; conveying the nobleſt apprehenſions of God; inculcating the juſteſt ſentiments of our dependance on him, and of mutual good-will to our fellow-creatures; permitting us to hope for mercy, but not on any other condition than as we ſhow it to them.

Thoughts on the Methodiſts. The abſurd Doctrines and Manner of Preaching in uſe among them.

LETTER XXVI.

To P— G— *Eſq;*

Dear Sir,

IF the *public benefit* ought to be the firſt object in the thoughts of a good ſubject, what is eſteemed a *public injury* merits his attention in the next place. Many are of opinion, that the *doctrine* of the *Methodiſts* is a public injury, and that this kind of fanaticiſm is a matter of political conſideration.—There is ſomething awful, even in a ſuppoſed deluſion, in *religious* concerns: you will judge how I *feel* myſelf affected, when I tell you what my own notions of theſe people are. If you mean to go deep into the ſubject, read the *Enthuſiaſm of the Methodiſts and Papiſts compared*, in 2 vol. 12mo, and a pamphlet intitled, *the principles and practices of the Methodiſts*; both written by men of great learning and candor; and zealous for the chriſtian proteſtant religion. — You will ſoon judge of the propriety of *your friend* — turning to this *new* and wonderful doctrine, which *may* be *felt*, it ſeems, but cannot be *underſtood*.

Under a notion of ſanctity, a great number of the lower claſſes of the people have been carried, as it were, into

into a *wilderneſs*, by the teachers of this doctrine, who plume themſelves, as if that were a *certain proof* of the *truth* of what they teach. It ſeems to me, that the arguments they uſe may be employed in favor of tranſubſtantiation, as well as of *Methodiſm*; for the Popiſh clergy cannot poſſibly deal more in miracles than the Methodiſts; and every devotee of the church of *Rome*, who has been the leader of a new ſect, has conſtantly pleaded his *calls* and *commiſſions* from heaven.

There ever will be *conteſts* on the ſubject of religion, in a country where *toleration* is an eſſential part of the conſtitution. But if under a notion of the only *true chriſtianity*, the general tenor of the *chriſtian* doctrine is groſsly *miſtaken*, or *wilfully* abuſed: If the *poor* are taught to expect what neither *reaſon*, nor *experience*, nor *revelation* can warrant, the doctrine may be of a *dangerous* tendency. And if it is deſtructive of that *humility*, which conſtitutes the *characteriſtic of chriſtianity*; or if the teachers of it do not *mean* what they *ſay*; or meaning it, *pry* into the ſecrets of heaven, imagining that they have made diſcoveries, beyond their neighbors, they will not only grow preſumptuous, but deſpiſe others, and may pretend to knowledge which the ſcriptures declare is not given, even to the angels in heaven. When this happens, is it not an invaſion of the prerogative of the *Almighty?* and does it not tend to the ſubverſion of all religion? Is it not neceſſary for every well-regulated ſtate to *diſcountenance* wild *fancies* and *opinions*, leſt under a notion of introducing the reign of the *ſaints*

on earth, the people ſhould forget what they owe to *civil government*; and confound that ſubordination which is eſſential to our *religious rights*.

In attempting to be more than *angels*, we may render ourſelves leſs than *men*. As *rational* Beings, we muſt be accountable for the uſe of our *reaſon*. If we exclude reaſon, religion will ſoon follow, and *enthuſiaſm* and *ſuperſtition* be ſubſtituted in their place. If every thing that may *poſſibly* belong to religion, conſidered as a ſcience, is brought down to the meaſure of *ſpiritual feelings*; and not contented with worſhipping God, and obeying his commandments in ſincerity of heart, *coblers* and *tinkers* muſt needs turn preachers of the goſpel, we muſt not be ſurprized to ſee them convert the ſcriptures into *fooliſhneſs*, and make a play-game of religion.

It muſt be granted, that thoſe who treat the *heart*, as having but a *ſmall ſhare* in religion, may fall ſhort of their aim; but thoſe who treat the *underſtanding* as having no *ſhare* in it, will convert it into *fancy* and *opinion*. From a vain attempt at excellencies, beyond what the condition of human nature will warrant, they will diſqualify themſelves for the performance of ſuch duties as are abſolutely required: and as *fantaſtic* hopes lay the foundation of *impious* confidence, the abſence of ſuch hopes create gloomy and indigeſted fears, which as certainly "betray the ſuccors that reaſon affords."—Thoſe whoſe imaginations are diſturbed, are moſt eaſily frightened. In the mean while, a *daring* confidence of having a peculiar intereſt in heaven, in *ſuch* minds as

are

are moſt ſuſceptible of theſe hopes, will create an arrogance and preſumption, which no correction can reach or *rectify*.

If it can with truth be ſaid any where, that every man has a religion of his own, it is in this nation: nor is it ſurprizing that *time*, *place*, and ſome common favorite opinions, ſhould bring men into communities, form them into *ſects*, and make it the *intereſt* of a *few* to ſupport thoſe ſects, at *all events*: but honeſt men generally keep their opinions to themſelves, if theſe claſh with the religion of their country, and are of a tendency to unhinge the minds of their fellow-ſubjects: or if they cannot ſupport their opinion by any revelation from God, common modeſty forbids their intruding it upon the world. If a doctrine is not intelligible upon principles of reaſon, the common gift of nature, it muſt be maintained on ſome *præternatural* foundation, or *miraculous* communications with heaven; and the whole will then reſt on that iſſue: but if it cannot make good what it pretends to, from that moment its profeſſors may be ſuppoſed *diſtempered* in their minds, or *diſhoneſt* in heart.

I am told by a very worthy friend of mine, that he was once acquainted with a *Frenchman* who uſed to tell a melancholy ſtory of his ſufferings, as a ſlave, in *Algiers*; and *wept* when he related it: He had told his tale ſo often, that at length he believed, or ſeemed to believe what he ſaid; tho' in good truth he had never been out of *France* in all his life.—This I do moſt ſeriouſly believe to be the caſe of ſome of the *Leaders of the Methodiſts*: with this remark-

remarkable difference, that they *gain* conſiderably by the *ſtory* they relate of their *communications* with *heaven*. Good might be originally intended, with regard to the vulgar, but *no end is good, where the means are evil.*

The beſt meaning part of them, miſtaking the too common abuſe of our rule of faith, for an error in the *faith itſelf*; or laying much too little ſtreſs on *good works*; run into wild extremes with regard to their opinion of both. In the mean while, I have been aſſured by ſome very ſenſible perſons, who have argued with them, that there is no ſuch thing in nature, as *pinning* them down. If you bring the matter to the tribunal of reaſon, they will not allow that *reaſon* can be the umpire. Being really below *reaſon* in their *belief*, they affect, out of reverence to *religion*, to be above making that uſe of it, which *we* imagine *God* intended we ſhould make; and conſequently, in the very firſt inſtance, they make *religion* adminiſter to the deſtruction of the nobleſt workmanſhip of heaven, diſplayed in *the reaſon of man*, as exerciſed in the contemplation of the perfections of *God*, and belief of the truths of chriſtianity: and thus they evidently ſet religion at variance with itſelf.

And how ſhall we ſet thoſe *right*, whoſe firſt principle it is to *exclude reaſon*, as if *faith* and the *grace of God*, by an occaſional miraculous intervention, were the primary cauſe of all the *reaſoning powers*, which the ſame God has given us; forgetting that *reaſon* conſtitutes our *very nature and eſſence as men*; and that without the *previous exertion of it*, no *faith*, or, I preſume, *grace*, can be received

ceived by us. *Zeal* without *knowledge* thus blazes forth, and its adherents may think themſelves *enlightened*; but they rather ſeem to be in danger of conſuming themſelves in their own flame: for whilſt they degrade human nature, they diſqualify themſelves from diſtinguiſhing *light* from *darkneſs*, and conſequently prepare their minds to receive as *doctrines*, as rank abſurdities as ever prevailed in any age of the world. This, *Sir*, ſeems to be the *tendency* of *Methodiſm*.

"The whole doctrine of *heavenly voices* and *viſions*, of *ſecret impreſſions* and *illuminations*, as laid down down by our modern reformers, has this natural and obvious exception in its way, that it is not agreeable to the *other parts of God's providential adminiſtration*, nor ſuitable to the nature of a *moral Being*, placed in a ſtate of *trial* and *probation*. We are not ſenſible that GOD *does*, nor has he told us that he *will*, uſually manifeſt himſelf by any *extraordinary* acts of his power, or *diſplay* of his preſence: he leaves us to diſcern him in the *order of his works*, and the regular government of his *providence*. He has given us his WRITTEN WORD, *as the ſtanding rule of our* RELIGIOUS *conduct*. In interpreting and applying this rule, we muſt *make* uſe of our *underſtanding*, cultivated in the beſt manner we are able, and furniſhed with all the *helps* we can procure. What aſſiſtance from his *good Spirit* he is pleaſed to give us for apprehending this rule, or living ſuitably to it, will doubtleſs *be* given in *ſuch a way*, as is conſiſtent with our *liberty*, and the *free exerciſe of our own faculties*."

Again:

Again: "The great Father of lights, who perfectly knows all the various inlets of knowledge, and to whoſe view every avenue to the human mind is open, can doubtleſs impreſs upon it any communication, he may be pleaſed to make, with a fulneſs of evidence that is unqueſtionable, and a degree of force that is irreſiſtible." He *may* do this, but has it been his uſual way of dealing with *rational*, *free*, and *accountable* creatures? He may aſſiſt our *underſtandings* and *wills*, but does it appear that he thinks proper entirely to *over-rule* them? —The tree is known by its *fruits*; but the primary cauſes in nature, how it grows, even this is beyond our comprehenſion. And can there be greater preſumption, than to bring the Deity on the ſtage, as if we had not juſtice done us, unleſs his *greateſt wonders* are brought down to the meaſure of our capacities, and made familiar to our hourly experience?

Do you believe that the *learned* and *reverend* gentleman, whom I have quoted, is in the *right?* If he is, the *Methodiſts* are certainly in the *wrong*. To ſuppoſe that none of their leaders are in the leaſt *unſound* at heart, is going farther perhaps than common ſenſe will warrant: and if we reckon upon ſuch, and exclude thoſe who are *extremely illiterate*, without any education at all, with thoſe, who, from the very nature of this doctrine, muſt be ſuppoſed to have *very warm imaginations*; I apprehend the number remaining, notwithſtanding their high pretences to the obtaining proſelytes, will be very inconſiderable. And if the truth were known, though

theſe all agree to lead the *vulgar*, there may be amongſt them as many different *ſtrange* opinions, as there are *ſtrange* preachers.

If you inſiſt on bringing theſe people to the teſt of the *wiſdom* of paſt ages, or the *preſent* ſtate of learning; the ſuperior parts and large mental endowments; or the exemplary piety of many, who differ with them in opinion; this amounts to nothing, but *wordly wiſdom*, which, they ſay, has no concern in the caſe.

Talk to them of *order* and *ſubordination*, as eſſential to good government, and the *peace* of ſociety; the anſwer to this is ready, "*We muſt obey God, and not man.*"

Appeal *then* to the *ſcriptures*, and the authority it carries along with it: this they ſay is not to be underſtood upon the ſame principles as direct our judgments in other writings, and that our *natural* faculties are very inadequate to the forming a true judgment.

Thus, my *good friend*, if you are inclined to turn Methodiſt, every thing that you have been bred up in veneration of, except the *grace of God*, muſt be diſcarded; and even that too, unleſs you will *allow* that you know *when* and *how* you received it: and you muſt remember the exact inſtant of time. In a word, you muſt refer the whole to *divine illumination*, and the immediate influence of the *Holy Ghoſt* operating on your mind; or ſomething ſo much like it, that themſelves cannot tell the difference. But for fear they ſhould ſay more than can free them from the imputation of being *really mad*, they often ſay what neither themſelves, nor any mortal beſides, can under-

underſtand. In this however the vulgar agree, that after a certain probation a man may ſay, "*I am confident that I* "*ſhall be ſaved*;" and till this can be ſaid, if I underſtand them, they maintain that the ſoul is not in its true and proper ſtate; *that is*, in a ſtate of ſalvation. Is not this a glorious creed! "*I am confident I ſhall be ſaved!*" why, it amounts to more than all the *indulgencies* or *abſolutions*, obtainable by *gifts* or *penance*, in *Italy*, *Spain*, or *Portugal!*

If they *can* make this out from the *New Teſtament*, I have read it to a very bad purpoſe. If they *cannot*, but refer me to ſuch exerciſes of my ſoul, as will produce theſe *divine illuminations*, and with all my might I cannot reach them; what am I to *think* of myſelf? — *Bid farewell to all hopes of heaven?* God forbid! no: I will *hope* ſtill. If I am to work out my ſalvation with fear and trembling, *I ſee no room for ſuch confidence.* If whilſt I ſtand, I am to take heed leſt I fall, *I ſee no room for ſuch confidence.* If St. *Paul* thought it neceſſary to be watchful of himſelf, leſt, whilſt he was preaching to others, he ſhould be himſelf *a caſt-away*; *I ſee no reaſon for ſuch confidence.* Neither do I *ſee*, or *hear*, of any, except *Methodiſts*, who have ſuch *illuminations:* and yet I both *ſee* and *hear* of many, who believe in God, and in Jeſus Chriſt; are more *learned*, more *wiſe*, more regular moral men, more eminent in ſtation and character, indubitably zealous for the good of mens ſouls, and *laboring* for that *good* on the *chriſtian* plan; in ſhort, as *perfect men* as the earth produces to all appearance, and yet not

pre-

pretending to any ſuch *illuminations*.—Therefore I cannot help ſuſpecting, that there is *fraud* or *madneſs* at the bottom of this pretenſion; eſpecially when I diſcover a ſtrain of *artfulneſs* run tthrough the whole conduct of the preachers of this new doctrine.

The ſame ingenious writer obſerves, that "their interpretations of *holy writ* often have ſomething plauſible, when they have nothing of a juſt and real foundation; *ſeeming* to agree with the literal ſenſe of the words, when they plainly contradict the whole tenor of its *meaning*, and are utterly inconſiſtent with the *intention* and *expreſs terms of the chriſtian covenant*." Several of the paſſages on which they lay the *ſtreſs* of their doctrine, "relate to the exerciſe of extraordinary powers granted to ſome chriſtians in the firſt ages of the church; and which were neceſſary *then* for its ſupport or propagation; but which were neither *promiſed*, nor ſeem neceſſary, *nor appear to have been granted in following ages*."

This ſeems to include the moſt material part of the *fallacy* of what theſe people pretend to. As to mankind's being impoſed upon; there is one part of them never eaſy but when they are under a *deluſion* of one kind or other. When our *paſſions* or *appetites* deceive us, we know where to apply for a remedy; but if we give up our *reaſon*, and preſume to bring the *Deity* on the common ſtage of life, to perform *that*, by *ſigns* and *wonders*, which the moſt enlightened part of the chriſtian world has been taught to believe, muſt be done by obſerving the *order of his providence*, and his *written law*, what can

we think? In obſerving the plain ſenſe of that ſyſtem of laws delivered down to us, by the *great Prince and Lawgiver, the Judge, the Saviour, and Redeemer of the world*, we are warned againſt every kind of deluſion; and for the ſame reaſon taught to *ſuſpect*, that *ſenſe* or *honeſty* is wanting in thoſe who pretend to "*ſudden* and "*momentary* acts, effecting in an *inſtantaneous*, and ope-"rating in an *irreſiſtible* manner."

I do not ſpeak entirely from *books*, nor *hear-ſay*. I will tell you what I have heard with *my own ears*, at the time that I ſaw the preacher.—I intended a long while ſince to hear Mr. *W.* at *Tottenham-court*, and I have at length compaſſed my deſign.—The *prayers* were performed with as much devotion as one generally finds at any church; and, as well as I remember, without any *excurſions* foreign to the *church ſervice*. Fame had indeed repreſented him to me, as a very great *orator*, but in this I was a little diſappointed, not but he performs, upon the whole, *tolerably well*. The *tunes* and *concordance* of their ſinging are alſo very *proper*, and agreeable: though I thought that *pſalms* or *anthems* would be better than *hymns*; or the true harmony of ſenſe and numbers, than ſuch *poor poetry* as was ſung.

When he begun his *ſermon*, the oddneſs of ſome of his *conceits*, his *manner*, and *turn of expreſſion*, had I not been in a place of *public worſhip*, would have excited my *laughter*. As he went on I became *ſerious*, then *aſtoniſhed*, and at length *confounded*, and conſequently you may think

think, in a moſt proper diſpoſition to enter the liſt of the brotherhood. But my confuſion aroſe from a mixture of *ſorrow* and *indignation*, that any man, bearing the name of a *miniſter* of our *meek* and *bleſſed Redeemer*, or the dignity of the *chriſtian prieſthood*, ſhould demean himſelf like an inhabitant of *Bedlam*. I thought I ſaw human nature in diſtreſs, as much as in the cells of *lunatics*; with this difference, that he was permitted to go abroad, and make others as *mad* as himſelf; which he might be able to accompliſh by means of the *credulity of his audience*, joined to the *art* of making them think, that himſelf and his *fraternity*, are the only people *in their ſenſes*.

The hearts of men anſwer to each other, allowing for the difference in education, as a face in a *mirror*. I could not help conſidering, that if this preacher could make ſuch an impreſſion on *my imagination*, what he might do with the fancies of his audience, who, with a ſtrong prepoſſeſſion in his favor, might be led to think him *holy*, in proportion to the terror he communicated; and becauſe *Felix* trembled at St. *Paul*'s doctrine, *(which he mentioned on this occaſion)* they muſt certainly tremble at *his*; tho' if St. *Paul* had behaved with the ſame indecency, I apprehend he would have been *turned out of* the court, and acquitted at once, as a *madman*. And *behold* on what principles the reputation of this kind of preaching is ſupported. "*St. Paul was, on a certain occaſion, conſidered as a* MADMAN, *and even told ſo*;" ſo ſays this gentleman, "*am I.*" And what inference do you imagine his audience will make? Why, "*St. Paul was certainly not*

mad, therefore Mr. W. is not mad." Further, "*The preaching of the true goſpel to the Gentiles was deemed fooliſhneſs, the ſame is ſaid of what I preach.*" What follows then? why, his auditors will ſay, "*the goſpel of Chriſt was certainly not fooliſhneſs, therefore what Mr. W. ſays is not fooliſhneſs, but the only true doctrine by which mankind can be ſaved.*" Is not this *admirable logic*, and *wonderfully* adapted to the uſes of the Methodiſts? But it goes a great way further; for if what *he* preaches is *not fooliſhneſs*, but the *wiſdom of God*, then what others preach contrary to his doctrine, is *fooliſhneſs*, and all thoſe are in a ſtate of damnation who liſten to them. You are to underſtand, Sir, that damnation is as familiar a word as *præternatural*; and that theſe preachers, having introduced *a low kind of language*, by no means conſiſtent with the *dignity of the pulpit*, carry their audience to *heaven*, as it were in *carts* and *coaches*; or tumble them into *hell* with *brooms* and *pitchforks*. What *wonderful* effects will ſuch *reaſoning*, and ſuch language, have on the minds of our *fellow-ſubjects*, to promote a true ſenſe of *chriſtian meekneſs* and *humility*, *religious order* and *civil government!*

In another inſtance the preacher was very explicit: "*How,*" ſays he, "*can a man love God, unleſs he knows that God loves him; and how is he to know that God loves him, but by his feelings? And whatever may be thought of the word* FEELING, *it is a very ſignificant term, and eaſy to be underſtood by thoſe who* DO *feel; and do we not feel the impreſſions made on the mind, as well as thoſe on the body?*"

Now

Now I muſt tell you, that I have been always taught to believe, " that a true love of God was founded in a right ſenſe of his perfections, being really amiable in themſelves, and beneficial to us: and *ſuch a love of God* will of neceſſity ſhow forth itſelf in our endevoring to *practiſe* the ſame virtues ourſelves, and exerciſe them towards *others*, which we profeſs to love and admire *in him*. Every good mind, when it reads or thinks upon the character of an *angel*, loves the *idea*, though it has no preſent communication with the ſubject, to whom ſuch a *lovely character* belongs: *much* more the *inexhauſtible* fountain of *all* perfections; of perfections without *number*, and without *limit*: the center in which *all* excellencies unite, in which *all* glory reſides, cannot but be the ſupreme object of *love* to a *reaſonable* and *intelligent* mind." Does Mr. *W.* conſider his auditors as neither *reaſonable* nor *intelligent?* if he does, he cannot get much *credit* by them: but would he therefore talk nonſenſe to them, and make them *believe* they *feel this love* in their hearts, as they might do a *cudgel* on their heads?

Indeed the common ſenſe of mankind leads us to think, that to be *virtuous*, and to *love God*, are terms which import the ſame thing; and to hope for his *love* when *we are virtuous*, ſeems as neceſſarily to follow. But this ſame *feeling* being *præternatural*, it requires *præternatural gifts*, to comprehend it.

Theſe preachers reaſon in a *round* till they make themſelves *giddy*; and laying *violent* hands on every text in ſcripture, whether addreſſed to *Jew* or *Gentile*, relating to

the *Moſaic* inſtitution, or the *chriſtian* covenant, they *torture* every expreſſion to *accommodate* it to their doctrine. Not attending to the imperfections of language, they do not ſee the neceſſity of making uſe of *figures*, even in common ſpeech, in the ordinary affairs of life; but determined to take every thing in a *literal* ſenſe, which can poſſibly make for their *favorite opinions*; they get poor people, as it were, within a *circle*, and keep them there by the *magic* of viſionary doctrines.

I muſt inform you, that oppoſite to this *celebrated* preacher, ſat a dozen or more of *old women*, of that claſs, who within this half century might eaſily have been perſuaded, by *threats* or *promiſes*, that they had rode in the air on *broomſticks*; and confeſſing it, might have been put to death by people as much bewitched as themſelves. And what is the caſe now? Theſe, and ſuch like *objects of compaſſion*, being miſguided in the ſenſe of the ſcriptures, we muſt conclude may be *more* eaſily perſuaded of a *good thing*, *namely*, that they have *felt the pangs of the new birth*, *by violent bodily pains*, *or convulſions of the ſpirit*: in conſequence of which they alſo feel the *abſolute aſſurance of everlaſting felicity*; at the very moment that their intellectual powers are ſo far decayed, that they do not diſtinguiſh between *receiving of alms*, in relief of their miſery, and *receiving hire as hummers and hawers*. You are to underſtand this as the denomination given, by many ſober perſons, to theſe *old women*, ſome of whom, I am aſſured, have *confeſſed*, that they are retained by hire,

hire, for *ſighing* and *groaning*. Certain it is they are *ready at command*: and when Mr. *W.* tells them, "*they are in a ſtate of perſecution*," and utters a pathetic declaration, "*that he hopes they will be permitted to return ſafe to their homes*;" they, with mournful ſighs, lifting up their eyes to heaven, cry, "*pray God!*" Though this farce is *lamented* by ſome, and *laughed* at by others, it never entered my thoughts that Mr. *W.* is ſo bold in his *manœuvre*, as to riſk his reputation in *actually hiring* ſuch inſtruments *for ſuch purpoſes*, notwithſtanding ſome of theſe women ſhould *think* they are hired, and declare that they are ſo.

I have heard, with my own ears, many things wonderful and aſtoniſhing, yet I could never bring myſelf to believe, that there are any ſuch things as *love-feaſts* amongſt the *Methodiſts*, as vulgarly thought, where men and women meet at night, and extinguiſh their *lights*, with a view, as 'tis preſumed, to follow the works of *darkneſs!* Such things would never be ſuffered in a civilized ſtate. But I fear that the *pretended fervent emotions of the ſpirit*, or the *real* convulſions of the imagination, in ſome weak *brothers* and *ſiſters*, do tend mightily to the gratification of the deſires of the *fleſh*: and I believe there are many *ſinners*, among thoſe who profeſs to have had *their new birth*; though this is a difficulty, which, upon their principles, I have not been able to ſolve.

Neither can I get over certain ſcruples, which I have entertained concerning a falſe principle in morality, that

evil may be done, that *good* may come of it. If a woman were proſecuted for robbing her huſband, though it were to give the money to a Methodiſt preacher for ſpiritual comfort, the laws of the land would not totally acquit her; nor could ſhe be innocent in the ſight of God. That ſuch tricks have been played by wives, and by relations leſs near than wives, I do verily believe is true: and if it is true, we may ſee a ſtriking proof of the force of art and contrivance on the part of the preacher, and the fatal effects of bigotry and enthuſiaſm in his followers.

Though theſe people deal in the wonderful; you would be as much ſurprized as I was if a preacher, with a grave face, ſhould tell you, "that ſeven and twenty years ago he was preſent, when a certain man uttered the moſt horrid *blaſphemies* and *imprecations*, and ſuddenly became *ſpeechleſs*; that the dumb man made ſigns to him and his company, to pray with him; that they prayed, and in *three days* the ſpeech of the offender was reſtored." Would you not imagine that it was intended to inſinuate, that a *miracle* had been wrought by the inſtrumentality of the preacher, who uniformly aſcribes the moſt common events, to a *miraculous interpoſition?* But perhaps you would be ſurprized, for what *end* this ſuppoſed miracle ſhould be wrought, or what marks of probability the ſtory carried along with it, when the congregation was told, "*that the man was no ſooner reſtored to his ſpeech, than he curſed and blaſphemed juſt as he did before.*" But be pleaſed to obſerve, that the inſinuation of the

miracle

miracle ſtands on its proper ground, whatever the *moral* application of the ſtory may be.

Pray, what is it *you* underſtand by the *love of Chriſt conſtraining us?* If by the general tenor and ruling principles of *your life*, and your *belief* of the great truths contained in the New Teſtament, you are induced to *perform* what is *commanded*; and as far as the frailty of your nature admits, to refrain from what is *forbidden*; I preſume the *love of Chriſt* CONSTRAINS *you*. But did it ever enter your thoughts, that a *miracle* ſhould be wrought to induce you to *relieve* the *diſtreſſed*, or to prevent your debauching your neighbor's daughter? yet CONSTRAINT, *by the love of Chriſt*, according to Mr. *W.* is *præternatural!*—Is it not *præternatural*, that any man in his ſenſes can be a *Methodiſt!*

In order to *ſerve up* as great a variety, as his fertile invention could ſupply, he likewiſe touched on the *thirty-nine articles*, and would have perſuaded us, that theſe teach no other doctrine than his own. I have often wiſhed that theſe articles were re-examined, tho' it has not been yet thought conſiſtent with the wiſdom of the ſtate. If we conſider *when* and *by whom* they were written, we muſt not be ſurprized if they convey ſome ambiguities, till the *whole context* is examined; and though we were at that time emerging from *groſs error* and *ſuperſtitition*, yet our forefathers were ſufficiently right in their meaning, and Mr. *W*'s ſubterfuge is a very low expedient to puzzle the *illiterate*. If you deſire farther ſatisfaction, I recommend to your peruſal, the *principles and practices of the Methodiſts*; and

if that pamphlet is not full enough, examine *Biſhop Burnet on the thirty-nine articles*. If Mr. *W.* has a mind to impoſe upon his unlettered audience, I fancy he muſt look out for ſome other authority.

When once the mind of a *good-hearted* or *well-intentioned illiterate perſon*, is impreſt with the *belief* of ſuch wonder-working powers, or ſome ſtrange *opinion like a belief*, (for I make a diſtinction) we muſt not be ſurprized at *any thing* that follows. Yet in *mercy* to his *weakneſs*, we ought to remind him how eaſily one, whoſe brain is hurt, *raves*, when you touch him on the ſtring, that vibrates to his heart. And how reſigned will the *poor religious* man be, in parting with the little he has, *inſtead of ſweating under a weary life*, to purchaſe the reverſion of heaven, and the *preſent* aſſurance of the *future* enjoyment of it!

As Mr. *W.* obliged us with a ſtory, I will tell *you* a real one to the purpoſe above mentioned. A gentleman who had been confined in *Bedlam* for ſome time, was thought to have recovered his ſenſes; but as he was going out from thence, another unhappy perſon in a *raving fit*, was heard to ſay, "*I am Pluto the god of hell, and I will ſet the world on fire.*" The other immediately catching the impreſſion, ſaid to his friends, "*Don't be afraid; if he is* PLUTO *the god of hell, and ſets the world on fire, I am* NEPTUNE, *the god of the ſeas; and as I command the waters, I will put the fire out.*" You will readily conclude that the *poor gentleman was conducted to his cell, till he ſhould talk like a man in his ſenſes.* I am, dear Sir, yours, &c.

Thoughts

Thoughts on the Methodiſts continued. The Danger of Enthuſiaſm, with ſome of the ſuppoſed Cauſes of it.

LETTER XXVII.

To the ſame.

THE doctrine and practice of the *Methodiſts*, having made ſome noiſe in this great town, though I had not health, nor patience, to ſet out above half the MINOR, at the *Hay-market*, I did not *think* the leſs, upon the *misfortunes* of my fellow-ſubjects, who are under a mental deluſion. There are certainly amongſt them many extreme good, and well-meaning people; and if an *honeſt pagan* is reſpectable, a *deluded chriſtian* is much more ſo. Beſides, there are ſo many articles of faith, which we hold in common with them; and ſo many points in morality in which there can be no difference, whilſt we lament their *fanaticiſm*, and wiſh to ſee them in the true path, we muſt treat them as *fellow-chriſtians*, and put them in it, if we can.

What the *ſad* conſequences of blind *zeal* and *enthuſiaſm* have been, in times paſt, may be eaſily deduced from *hiſtory*.—Some cauſes operate in the mind, and create a *diſtemper* as uniformly in the *moral* world, as pain, ſickneſs, and diſeaſe, ariſe from irregular motions in the *animal* part of our frame and compoſition. As we occaſionally

ally ſee ſome extraordinary GENIUS's ariſe in every *art* and *ſcience*, who *promote* or *injure* the public welfare; or with a mixed character do both, alternately; uncommon efforts in religious concerns, muſt ariſe from very ſuperior parts in diſtinguiſhing, or from groſs fanaticiſm, or rank hypocriſy. Now if the *event* proves to the candid world, that any good is done by ſuch efforts, we ſhould try to benefit by ſuch *good*, and reject the *evil* part.

It is now about a *century* ſince we were *mad* with *pretences to piety*; for piety it ought not to be called. After this religious frenzy, or mad hypocriſy had had its play, we returned back to the primitive *plan* of true reformation: But over-ſhooting the mark, we went into the other extreme, and religion was quite put out of countenance. Tired of ſuch kind of uſurpation, religion took her ſeat again, and the reign of more *regular equal* piety ſucceeded, when people thought it a duty to *worſhip God* in their *own houſes*, as well as at *church*; and to be aſſured that their prayers ſhould be offered up to him, with uninterrupted aſſiduity, every *great family* had a *chaplain*, and almoſt every little one, a ſtated time for prayer. This cuſtom is ſtill obſerved in ſome large families, in a few counties in this kingdom; but the number, upon the whole, I fear, is ſmall: I am not happy enough to hear of more than *five* about *London*, and one of them is an *Archbiſhop*'s. Upon diſcontinuing ſo laudable a practice, and, we may ſuppoſe, thinking *lightly* of the intention of it, a furious inundation of *profligacy* broke in, eſpecially upon the *vulgar*. At length ſome of theſe, whoſe

whoſe fire had carried them the fartheſt in *wickedneſs*, became the greateſt *pietiſts*, reſolving to devote themſelves to *religion*, as ſtrongly as they had been devoted to work iniquity, and under the ſtile and title of *Methodiſts*, to pray *literally*, *without ceaſing*.

To tell you my real thoughts, it ſeems as if the neglect of this cuſtom of *prayers in families* was one of the cauſes why ſo many lived as *without God in the world*; and that others having deviated into the oppoſite extreme, run mad with *religion*. It is reaſonable to believe, that ſeeing many neglectful of their duty, and having more piety than judgment, they drew very haſty concluſions, with regard to the *common faith profeſſed*, as well as the common *practice of the multitude*. Excluding reaſon, which they had ſo much violated, they ſeem inclined to reform away *common ſenſe*; and under the diſguiſe of a *new doctrine* and *ſuperlative ſanctity*, to introduce *papal* ignorance and ſuperſtition.

In *Cromwell*'s time, it is well known, that the *Popiſh* clergy, diſguiſed as *Reformers*, found their way to our pulpits, and we muſt not be ſurprized, if the ſame ſhould happen again, amongſt the *Methodiſts*. And a preacher, though conſcious he is *no ſaint*, may have art enough to make his followers think that he is one; and falſe piety may thus undermine *true religion*. We often ſee as abſurd conſtructions of the ſcriptures, on *religious* principles, as of *toleration* on political ones: and *zeal* and *impudence* ſometimes operate in the ſame way. The love of novelty, and our common liberty, frequently occaſion

great

great credulity; and *our daring genius* turns us to whatever our *imaginations* ſuggeſt: whilſt a mind ſoftened by a ſenſe of guilt, and terrified by an *enthuſiaſtic* preacher, is open to every appearance that is *ſpecious*.

There are many cauſes for ſuch doctrines being adopted; and a careful examination of them will point out the *great evils* that attend them. "If," ſays an ingenious writer, "to this newneſs in the *manner* there is added a little of the marvellous in the *matter*, its power of affecting will increaſe, and it will be received with more avidity of attention, proportionably to the *quantity* of the wonderful it contains. When the *Methodiſts* harangue their ſwains in the country, they are well attended: but St. *Francis*, when he preached to the *ſwallows* was attended much better. A Methodiſt, when he preaches up ſalvation by *faith* alone, will draw numbers about him: if he does it in the utmoſt latitude of the *Antinomian* principle, and to the abſolute excluſion of *all works*, he may be expected to draw much greater: but ſhould any one undertake to bring all the *ſheep* and *aſſes* in the fields to hear him, as the above-mentioned *ſaint* is ſaid to have done, I would lay money on his ſide that he out-does them both.

Some oblique ſtrokes of ſatire on the indolence, ſelf-intereſt and corruption of modern preachers, will likewiſe take mightily with the populace, and never fail to raiſe theMethodiſts in their eſteem. No diverſion tickles the fancy of the Mob ſo much, as when one of their *betters* is brought in to be *baited*. If it be one of the worldly-

worldly-minded clergy, who minds the fleece more than the flock, the pleaſure is much improved, and the triumph is conſiderably heightened. A *Jew* or a *Relapſe* will pretty well ſatisfy the appetite of ſome popiſh countries, but we cannot give the rabble here, a higher treat, than by ſerving up one of the clergy for their entertainment.

The doctrines of free-grace, election, and reprobation will alſo be wonderful, and always pleaſing to a popular audience. The gracious diſtribution of ſpiritual gifts, without any regard to the merit or qualification of thoſe to whom they are given: the rank to which the man of low degree on earth is to be advanced, as one of the *elect* or *favorites* of heaven; the general and undiſcriminating denunciation of woe againſt thoſe, who *in their life-time have received their good things*; theſe topics never fail to engage the attention, and gain the applauſe from thoſe of the lower claſs; and they will pleaſe the more in the hands, and under the ſkilful direction of a maſter, who can illuſtrate them in that familiar way which is level to the capacity of all his hearers; and in which the Methodiſt preachers are allowed ſo much to excel.

As it may be difficult to abſtract low and groveling minds from the groſſneſs of material things, it may be, and has often been dangerous to the public peace, to raiſe in the vulgar too high notions of their favor and intereſt in heaven: for whatever deſcription of ſpiritual rewards, or images of celeſtial happineſs may be ſet before them, I much doubt whether they will not direct their thoughts to mere objects of ſenſe; will not ſwell with the expecta-

tion

tion of earthly bleſſings, and plume themſelves on the value of thoſe reverſionary poſſeſſions, which will fall to their ſhare, *when the ſaints come to inherit the earth.*

Nor is it a ſmall recommendation of theſe doctrines to the *common people*, that as every thing is repreſented to be done for them, by the all-ſufficient merits of a Saviour, little or nothing is underſtood to remain that can be *properly* done by themſelves. Obligations of duty are in a great meaſure ſuperſeded; attention to behave properly under all the various relations of life, is held by many to be unneceſſary; any attempts to improve in virtuous living may be deemed preſumptuous by ſome, and as acts of an arrogant ſelf-righteouſneſs; or probably the *dangerous artifices of Satan* to ſeduce them from the right way of ſalvation."

You ſee, *Sir*, in what ſtrong terms the ingenious and reverend author has pointed out ſeveral cauſes obvious to the experience of mankind; and it is certain, that under a notion of pre-eminence in ſanctity, they may open a door to great errors and confuſion.—Let us lament our ſins in duſt and aſhes, and exert all the energy of our ſouls to worſhip GOD in *ſpirit* and in *truth*; to devote our lives to his ſervice, and to pray for his aſſiſtance; but let ſuch aſſiſtance come in the way that he ſhall think fit to give it. Surely this doctrine of *Methodiſm* cannot, in the iſſue, be productive of *good*.

With regard to improvements in morality, what ſay the Methodiſts themſelves? The beſt account I can find, is this. One of them ſays "there are many magiſtrates in this

this city * and kingdom in general, I believe, who can remember what the bulk of the common people of *England* were about *twenty* years ago. In and about *London* particularly, nothing were more frequent than murders and robberies in the ſtreets, and highways; but let theſe magiſtrates be aſked now, and I dare ſwear they will confeſs, that things have been upon the mending hand ever ſince, till at length the lower claſs of people are reduced to a *regularity* and *good behavior*, that is not to be paralelled in the inhabitants of any *nation upon earth*, where the numbers are ſo *great*, and the metropolis ſo *extenſive*."—He goes on,

"Now I would be glad to know, to what this happy change has been owing? Shall I venture to anſwer? to a ſenſe of religion, which for theſe laſt twenty years has been growing among the commonalty: a ſenſe which has reſtrained their natural diſſoluteneſs, corrected the defects of education, and opened their underſtanding to hear and believe the word of God in the ſcriptures."—

Suppoſe we grant the *Methodiſt* all this; various cauſes may have concurred: and as we know there are ſome *bad* Methodiſts, they muſt grant us, that there are *ſome few moral* people, amongſt the poor, who are *not Methodiſts*; and does it follow that the ſame, or much greater good, might not be done with the ſame zeal, by preaching the *plain doctrine of chriſtianity*, which promiſes the *ſame rewards*, and threatens the *ſame puniſhments*, hereafter. If nothing can be done but by *miracle*, we may

as

* *London* and *Weſtminſter*.

as well refer ourſelves to the miraculous care of heaven, and not ſow our fields, nor plant our gardens. Piety is too good a thing for people to be *cheated* into it; but if thoſe very pietiſts diſcover their deluſion, groſs *impiety* will probably follow. The very cauſe of virtue is injured, when a *lie* is invented to ſupport it, and the conſequence of a *falſity* is, that the bulk of mankind are apt to blend the *virtuous* and the *vicious* together, and impute *all appearance of religion*, to *hypocriſy* or *madneſs*.

Accordingly we ſee, that thoſe who are *not Methodiſts* deſpiſe and ridicule thoſe who *are*; whilſt the Methodiſts themſelves, in ſpite of all their piety, are taught to give up their *fellow-ſubjects*, and *fellow-chriſtians*, as children of *perdition*: ſo that upon the examination of this whole matter, the good done to the *common people* of theſe kingdoms, for it is not confined to this *metropolis*, I am afraid is not ſo great as this gentleman imagines.

What is *good*, will ſtand the teſt: what is *not good*, or founded in *error*, cannot be of *divine* original. Can any doctrine be more pure and ſimple, than that of the eſtabliſhed religion, *regular*, *even*, *conſiſtent*; founded in the moſt ſubſtantial learning, and the trueſt piety? And is there not room to ſuſpect that thoſe who have been ſucceſsful in promoting the *morality* they pretend to, by means of this new faith, which other divines do not teach, are intoxicated with notions of their own *importance*? And if theſe people reject communion with their neighbors, deſert the paſtor of their pariſh, and vilify the preachers of the goſpel, on this account, and as it were in contempt

tempt of the eſtabliſhed religion; are not theſe great *evils*, *morally* and *politically* conſidered; and do not the *Methodiſts* counteract the very *ſobriety* they pretend to?

Modeſty leads men to ſuſpect the fallacy of their own judgment, in caſes where the higheſt authority is oppoſed to them, if the reaſons advanced are very *forcible*. Tho' theſe may not carry conviction, againſt prejudices in favor of new doctrines, the principles which promote *public peace*, *good order*, and *national felicity*, muſt be entitled to a much fairer examination, than the Methodiſts chuſe to beſtow. From the moment people reaſon *unfairly*, or advance as facts that which they can give no teſtimony of but their own *aſſertions*, in all common concerns of life there is room for *ſuſpicion* of *falſehood*. The real miracles of the firſt ages, if I may be allowed to mention them in the ſame ſentence, were ſupported by very *different* kind of evidence, than any of the wonderful illuminations which the Methodiſts pretend to.

And what ſays the hiſtorian, of the *Montaniſts*, who pretended to juſt the ſame kind of wonders as the *Methodiſts*? Speaking of *Montanus* their leader, he ſays, "They deemed what they ſaw in him as the true effect of the *Holy Ghoſt*, and were thereby lifted up with extreme vanity and confidence, as if nothing could be greater and higher than his diſpenſation: and he being *raviſhed* with the honor of ſeeing himſelf ſo eſteemed, and liſtened to, uſed *divers artifices and ſtratagems* to draw in others, and ſome *ſober* and *ſincere chriſtians* followed him. He looked on the *governors of the church* as much *degenerated*, inveſted

only with an *outward* character: HE *had more of the* SPIRIT *than all of them*, and by virtue of his *extraordinary miſſion*, would be exempted from the inſpection of his rightful ſuperiors, whoſe ſtanding rules muſt give way to whatever was taken for a *prophetic impetus*. *Montanus*, intoxicated with theſe *high* notions, *went up and down*, and drew after him ſeveral *religious melancholiſts*. Several of the weaker ſex, excited by his *high pretenſions*, were ſeized upon by the ſame ſpirit; as *Priſcilla* and *Maximilla*, who no ſooner were touched by the *power* in *Montanus*, but immediately they left their *huſbands*, fanſying that henceforwards they were to be eſpouſed to none but *Chriſt*. They accordingly fanſied themſelves *heavenly virgins*, eſpouſed by Chriſt, who perſonally viſited them, converſing with them as one friend converſes with another. — Thus led on with a *falſe faith*, and puffed up beyond meaſure, they fell into ſundry ſnares, and eaſily miſtook the *imaginations of their own hearts*, for the *pure inſpiration* of the *divine Spirit*."

What a picture is this! — The love of *order*, *peace*, and *harmony* are confeſſedly the trueſt *criterions* to judge of a *diſciple of Jeſus Chriſt*: and though I preſume the Almighty, requires of us, *in our different ſtations of life*, the ſame devotion of the heart, there is no exact number of hours required to be ſpent in prayer. But if things are carried ſuch lengths, that an audience is admoniſhed to beware of the *public worſhip* and religion of their country, it is high time to check a doctrine, which appears to have nothing but the moſt confident aſſertions of incredibilities to ſupport it.

It

It has generally appeared to me, that as the faults of a *ſervant* are often owing to the imprudence or folly of the *maſter*, ſo the faults of our *clergy* are imputable in a great meaſure to the *laity*; ſometimes by *expecting too much ſervice of them*, and at others by our *ſitting down ſatisfied with too little*. But the *Methodiſts* aſpire at having "wiſe and juſt men, who have only the glory of God, and the welfare of mankind in view, without any proſpect of worldly power, pleaſure, or profit to themſelves;" and they require alſo that they ſhould be endowed with *præternatural powers from heaven*, ſuch as I apprehend God has not been pleaſed to grant to the ſons of men, ſince the firſt periods of the *chriſtian æra*. And where are ſuch *clergy?* where indeed are ſuch *men* upon the face of the whole earth, even without theſe gifts? I fear the number is very ſmall: the *Methodiſt preachers* do not appear to be ſuch *wiſe*, nor ſuch *diſintereſted* men. On the contrary, if a miniſter thinks himſelf authorized to utter ſuch *familiar vulgar diſcourſe* from the pulpit, as is not fit for the plow-tail, though it may gain him followers, and *turn him to account*, it is a queſtion if the event may not be very injurious; and inſtead of promoting the true glory of God amongſt men, if it will not caſt a dark cloud on religion, bring a nation into contempt, and draw down the reſentments of heaven. And ſuppoſing the devotion of the *paſtor* to be ever ſo *ſincere*, if it is diſſonant to the *laws of the land*, and the true ſpirit of a *free government, upon our plan*, it will hardly ſtand the teſt of being agreeable to the *laws of God*; for theſe ge-

nerally act reciprocially on each other. *True religion* can hardly ſubſiſt without *ſuch a government*; and I believe no ſuch government can ſubſiſt without true religion.

In the mean while, every circumſtance which brings on diſcord or confuſion in PUBLIC, or *diſtreſs* in *private life*, may be ſuſpected as not founded *in truth*. To maintain the peace and good order of this world, as preparatory to the happineſs of the *next*, is one of the chief precepts of our great *Lord* and *Maſter*, as we find in almoſt every paſſage of the *New Teſtament*. Therefore if we mean to promote that *charity*, and *benevolence* which his religion requires, we ſhall be naturally led to conſider the *purity*, *ſimplicity*, and *integrity* of our plan of government; the great lenity in the executive part of it; the majeſtic ſimplicity which accompanies the true *proteſtantiſm* of the *church of England*: and the admirable correſpondency of this, with the purity and benignity of the chriſtian religion.

Unleſs we *allow* ourſelves to be as *ignorant* and illiterate as *Pagans*; or acknowledge the *præternatural* illuminations pretended to by the *Methodiſts*, we muſt argue on theſe principles, though no arguments ſhould prevent thoſe who are poſſeſſed of the opinion of theſe illuminations, from believing in them. Great reverence is due to government on the moſt approved principles of all religions; but the *beauty* and *truth* of ours are very obvious: and if the conduct of any ſubject claſhes with it; under a falſe notion of *ſanctity*, they will injure the thing we have the moſt reaſon to triumph in. The

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Methodiſt preachers underſtand this doctrine in part, but they *contradict* themſelves; *that is*, they profeſs to honor the KING, but they vilify the clergy, of whom the king is the *head*.

It muſt be granted, that it is a very great happineſs for a preacher to *read* with a true emphaſis; to have a good utterance; and above all to *feel* what he *ſpeaks*, whether he *preaches* or *prays*; for it is thus, and perhaps thus only, that he can make others feel it. Where there is no paſſage to the heart, but by way of the *paſſions*, theſe muſt be addreſſed from the pulpit, or the audience will be left juſt where they were found; but we muſt obſerve that ſound *doctrine* and ſubſtantial piety are frequently without the gift of *oratory*, as oratory is ſometimes without *ſenſe*.

I lay it down as a maxim, that we may learn ſomething from every body, were it only in marking their *inattention* to what belongs to their rank and office. No *chriſtian* can diſpute, but that a preacher of the *goſpel of Chriſt* is of the nobleſt profeſſion in the world:— why is it not ſtill more *reſpected amongſt us?* I will tell you my opinion: it is becauſe the *laity*, no matter upon what foundation, are afraid of introducing *eccleſiaſtical pride and dominion*, the clergy, in the mean while, not generally doing themſelves juſtice in their *manner* of addreſſing their audience, to excite that *reverence*, which is beſt calculated to ſpread the influence of piety, and create an awful ſenſe of religion, and love and reſpect for themſelves, as preachers of the goſpel, or meſſengers from heaven. They

ſeem alſo to be ſuſpicious of themſelves in regard to the imputation of ſingularity, when they are not conſcious that they affect any. This curbs the genius of many zealous and able preachers: and leſt they ſhould degenerate into *enthuſiaſm*, or apply themſelves to the *paſſions only*, I think they often appear *too cold* and *languid*, when they apply to our *reaſon* only.

The bulk of mankind are almoſt neceſſarily illiterate; but they are not therefore diſinclined to religion: On the contrary, there is in the human mind a natural propenſity to religion; and the moſt unlettered know ſo much, that the ſoul of the *peaſant* is as precious, in the ſight of *God*, as the ſoul of the *prince*. That the ſame God is addreſſed in the humble village-church, as in the ſolemn city-temple, and may be worſhiped with as pure a heart. And it is not leſs obvious, that if preaching is conſiſtent with *truth*, right reaſon, the ſcriptures, and the *dignity of the pulpit*, the prince will be edified by what the *peaſant* underſtands.

But were ſome preachers, men of ſenſe and candor, to aſk themſelves this ſimple queſtion; "*Have I made* "*any conſiderable impreſſion on my audience to-day?*" the anſwer would often be in the *negative*. Many a well-meaning man, who is conſcious of being *careleſs*, or has ſome *inſuperable impediment*, would frequently confeſs this opinion of himſelf; not ſo much from the fault of his audience, as his own. The next queſtion is, "*To what* "*purpoſe do I preach?*" Part of the anſwer is, "*To* "*get my own bread:*" yet as an honeſt man he means

alſo

alſo to do his duty in the double capacity of a *teacher*, and a *chriſtian*: and as he can never be in want of the beſt digeſted diſcourſes; let his parts be ever ſo inferior, ſpeaking of him as a *clergyman*, he may model them to the capacities of his audience, at leaſt among the *lower claſſes* of the people; and conſequently nothing will remain for him to do, as to the buſineſs in queſtion, more than to *ſtudy* and *practiſe* the moſt efficacious *manner of preaching*.

But whatever complaints the *laity* may make, I have ſeen and obſerved the conduct of eccleſiaſtics in many other countries; and I do aſſure you, that as ours appears to be the pureſt religion, our clergy are incomparably the moſt reſpectable of any in the world: and in this view I include the *Diſſenting* miniſters, as well as the *Epiſcoparians*. And how many great men, and glorious examples, are there amongſt them, where the moſt ſolid eloquence is diſplayed in ſentiments and language ſuperior to the greateſt maſters of antiquity, who declaimed on worldly matters. What can affect the mind of man ſo deeply as the conſiderations which are commenſurate with *eternity!* How does the heart expand itſelf, and the tongue exert an angelic energy, in proportion as the divine excellencies of the great Creator and Lord of heaven, are ſuperior to all created Beings on earth! No ſubject can be ſo intereſting to man, as the immortality of his ſoul; and the eloquence which flows from the great truths of chriſtianity, raiſe our ideas to the ſublimeſt heights which they are capable of. "Our clergy," ſays an ingenious writer, "have no farther to look for an example of the

perfection they may arrive at, than to St. *Paul*'s harangues*; that when he, under the want of ſeveral advantages of nature (as himſelf tells us) was heard, admired, and made a ſtandard to ſucceeding ages, by the beſt judge of a different perſuaſion in religion: I ſay, our clergy may learn that, however inſtructive their ſermons are, they are capable of receiving a great addition, which St. *Paul* has given them a noble example of; and the chriſtian religion has furniſhed them with the certain means of obtaining it." But may we therefore deſcend to the vulgar, ſo far as to *rant* and *rave?* No: the humbleſt villager can judge of what is decorous, natural, and harmonious, better than to be *pleaſed* or *inſtructed*, though he may be *frightened* and *confounded* by ſuch demeanor; and there is reaſon to ſuſpect that nothing but ignorance and ſuperſtition can engage him to love or revere the preacher. But if the preacher *gains* by the ignorance and ſuperſtition of his auditors, then we may reſolve the whole, with reſpect to himſelf, into low art and iniquitous contrivance to render *even the ſuppoſed word of God*, ſubſervient to worldly ends.

Our common people are ſaid to be the moſt diſſolute in the world, particularly in and about *London:* the Methodiſts ſay this. For my own part, I believe they are not ſo bad as is imagined; but they would certainly be *leſs diſſolute*, if they were told in *ſtronger terms*, and with

* *Viz.* His reaſonings upon idolatry at *Athens*. His diſcourſe on the reſurrection to the *Corinthians*. His harangue before *Agrippa* on his own converſion, and the neceſſity of that of others, *&c.*

with more emphaſis, what infinite danger there is in being *wicked*; and what joys there are in the *hopes* of heaven, even without that *certainty* of it, which the *Methodiſts* fondly pretend to: and if a man's talents be as properly adapted to the pulpit, as the actors to the ſtage, and he learns his part as well; the reality oppoſed to the fiction, and the greater importance of it, muſt give him a vaſt ſuperiority. Whatever the *Methodiſts* may pretend, the clergy of all denominations ſhould conclude, that the influence of a preacher muſt be expected to ariſe from *ſtudy* and *attention*, not from *illumination*, *preternatural* aſſiſtance, or a medley of reaſon and nonſenſe, uttered with vehemence and vociferation.

But it ought moreover to be obſerved, how impoſſible it is, on the preſent plan, to do juſtice to *all* the common people, in every part of this kingdom. How many inſtances are there, where *one* miniſter ſupplies *two*, *three*, or *four* villages at ſeveral miles diſtance! If we mean to *curb enthuſiaſm*, we muſt rectify this error where it prevails. If the miniſter muſt gallop over the *ſervice*, as he gallops over the *ground* from one church to another; and if the church is often without any *ſervice* at all, what will be the *conſequence?*

Farther, in order to avoid the pageantry of the church of *Rome*, we get into a habit of indifference with regard to common external decency. How many places of divine worſhip have I ſeen, where one may almoſt literally ſay, that the winds whiſtle through the broken walls, as well as the broken windows; and where the venerable

venerable roof nods over the heads of the congregation, as if it meant to cruſh them into their original clay, to make bricks of, towards rebuilding their church: whilſt the proudeſt monuments of human art, even our moſt ſolemn temples, except it be on *Sundays*, who is it frequents them? *half a dozen antient maids, and as many decrepid widows.* It is true, one evil has been lately corrected by the prudence and piety of the clergy: it is not long ſince that the *din* made *without* the choir, even of St. *Paul's cathedral*, confounded thoſe *within* it, when they were at their devotions.

I would not have you imagine, that I am ſo unfortunate as not to ſee a great deal of real devotion: I only ſeek for ſome of the obvious cauſes, why ſo many of the people, who are ſo *violently* inclined to piety, run after *new* doctrines and *new* preachers, merely as theſe ſeem to be in *earneſt*: we ſee *their abſurdities* are followed, when *truths*, the moſt intereſting to mankind, are often neglected.

Indeed, to conſider religion in general, we do not appear to be affected in practice, equal to the enlightened age we live in; though our knowledge ſerves to ſhow us, what *we ſhould not be*; and among other things, that the opinions of *Methodiſts* are the very *dregs of ignorance and credulity*, and the genuine produce of *enthuſiaſm.*

Whatever *miſchievous* effects may attend *Methodiſm*, I believe it has done *ſome good*, ſo far as zeal and attention operate; and their preachers have grounded their hopes of ſucceſs, and *perſevere* upon this very principle. But as

as if they were conſcious they had no other ground to ſtand upon, they *over-act* their part, and deliver their oracles with a monſtrous vociferation; and inſtead of exciting devotion among ſuch as have *common ſenſe*, they create *contempt*, and expoſe themſelves to the laughter of the *illiterate*, and do a general *injury* to religion.

But this is not the only thing we complain of. A *Bridewell*, or a *Blue-coat* boy in garments like a girl's petticoat, or a gallant ſeaman *on ſhore*, hampering his legs *in trouſers*, tho' cuſtom may render them familiar, and they may be eſteemed as honorable badges; yet in the eye of reaſon *theſe* appearances create laughter: but it is no ſubject of laughter to ſee a man aſſuming the *prerogatives of a black gown*, and under the notion of being an *inſtructor ſent from God*, departing from *ſenſe*, *reaſon*, and the *ſcriptures*, aſſembling a number of poor people to liſten to the rants of enthuſiaſm, and by the force of their affections dancing them about in a ſtring like *puppets*. This is a ſubject of *ſorrow*, and to guard the *poor* from being ſo impoſed upon, is a duty of real moment which we owe them. If we pretend to guard the liberties and property of our fellow-ſubjects, and do not point out to them their danger from preachers, who teach a doctrine which we apprehend is not from *heaven*, we ſhall not do them that juſtice, which every true patriot muſt wiſh and endevor to promote.

Whatever may be pretended, with regard to the *force* of *novelty* on the minds of the vulgar, it would be a *melancholy* caſe indeed, if the pulpit was to be modelled, as the

the *ſtage* ſometimes is, to the whims, the *corruption* or *folly* of mankind.—Fools and madmen there ever will be, and the man who is mad thro' an exceſs of piety, may do as much miſchief as he who is *outragiouſly criminal*, not having *any piety at all*. The community in both caſes is in danger: with regard to the firſt, his *diſeaſe* ſeems to be the leaſt pernicious, conſidered as an *individual*, but conjunctively, with a multitude, it may be the moſt *dangerous*, as being leaſt practicable to ſubdue: for every honeſt man will unite to check the extravagancies of the irreligious madman; but the other ſeems to be the leaſt *curable*. Let us try to preſerve our *reaſon*, and adore the God that gave it! But if ſuch conſtructions of the ſcriptures, as the *Methodiſts* make, do paſs current with mankind, I am afraid that *reaſon* and *chriſtianity* will take their leave of the world together, and leave us bewildered in darkneſs! FAREWEL.

Thoughts on the Methodiſts continued, with Obſervations on their new Birth, and alſo on theatrical Exhibitions in Matters of Faith.

LETTER XXVIII.

To the ſame.

WHEN I wrote to you laſt, I thought I had exhauſted my ſubject; but I find that, in my former letters, I only touched upon the point, which is of the greateſt moment amongſt the Methodiſts. You have heard much talk about *their New Birth*, and it has excited my attention. I hope you remember ſo much of your *catechiſm*, that part of the anſwer upon the queſtion of *baptiſm* is, "*a death unto ſin, and a* NEW BIRTH *unto righteouſneſs.*" But I find that St. *Paul* writing to the *Romans*, ſays, "*Know ye not that ſo many of us as were baptized into Jeſus Chriſt, were baptized into his death; that like as Chriſt was raiſed from the dead, by the glory of the Father, even ſo we alſo ſhould walk in newneſs of life.*" And this emblem of *dying* with Chriſt, and riſing with him again, to walk in *newneſs of life*, is, I ſuppoſe, the *new birth*, ſo far as it is applicable to us, who are *already chriſtians*; but among the Methodiſts it is ſomething *præternatural.*

A change of *life* and *manners*, with reſpect to the *moral* world, in the moſt *familiar idiom of our language*, is be-

becoming a *new creature.* Change of *ſpirit*, with regard to a *ſpiritual ſtate*, is called a *new birth*, by analogy with our *natural birth*, which firſt gave us bodies and a *material* ſubſtance. But if any imagine they feel the *pangs of regeneration*, as a power agitating their ſouls, or that they are in a ſtate of *impeccability* after this *new birth*, they may ſubject themſelves to the imputation of frenzy, as much as if they were to pretend to be *invulnerable*; or to maturity of knowledge in infancy; or to know the *time* and place of their *nativity*, with every thing that paſſed at it, without being informed of any one circumſtance. The *Methodiſts* generally pretend to tell the *time* and *place* of their *regeneration:* if they mean that they were ſtruck with a ſenſe of religion, at any certain time, in any *extraordinary* manner, and more than they ever were before, it may be true: and if they would let it reſt here, their notion might be intelligible, and we might agree. But this does not ſatisfy their *religious breathings.* They carry this notion to the heights I have mentioned above.

I had once occaſion to aſk a young woman what prayers ſhe uſed: her anſwer was, "*that thoſe who had the* NEW BIRTH *had no occaſion for any* FORM *of prayer*," which was the ſame to me as if ſhe had ſaid, "*I am a Methodiſt arrived to a ſinleſs ſtate.*" What a deſirable ſecret is this, in which the moſt illiterate come to ſuch perfection by *inward impreſſions!* Yet if one may be allowed to judge from their *writings*, there is a *ſchiſm* among them, with regard to their capacity of ſinning after the *new birth.* Some maintain that they *cannot ſin*; others know

know the contrary by ſad experience. The queſtion then is, have the *ſinners* really had the *new birth*, as they imagined? — This is a knotty point, which can never be clearly decided by them. If they mean to talk the language of reaſon and common ſenſe, all that can be ſaid is, that there may be in the *beſt men* ſuch an uniformity in their *thoughts* and *actions*; they may be ſo *habitually obedient to their reaſon*, as to be *free*, ſpeaking as men, from falſe biaſſes and corrupt inclinations, and ſo far they *cannot ſin*; as a good man *cannot* do an *evil* action, *that is*, CANNOT do it conſiſtently with his principles as a *good man*. Where *good men* have arrived to any conſiderable degree of *perfection*, it is declared of them that they *cannot ſin* *; which expreſſion, the whole context being conſidered, can poſſibly ſignify no more than having the *liberty* of their minds ſo *perfect*, that allowing for the unavoidable infirmities of human nature, they are not in *great danger* of being *ſeduced*.

The character which the *evangelical* doctrine relates to, can belong but to very few, and can be the reward only of an *unwearied* perſeverance. But this is not what the *Methodiſts* mean. Thoſe only can underſtand their meaning, who have the ſame *feelings* as themſelves; and having the ſame *feelings*, they may think they have found a *meaning*, though it be only a *fanciful opinion* of ſome power working in their minds, which if it were, as many of them *ſay*, it would be *præternatural* indeed; but unleſs we ſuppoſe that miracles are wrought in favor of

every

* Vid. 1ſt John iii. 9.

every convert, when no man in his ſenſes, preſumes to ſay but that *converts* may be made *without miracles*, we may as fairly *conclude* that there is rank *deluſion* and *enthuſiaſm* in the belief of the *Methodiſts*.

Let us ſet this queſtion in the faireſt point of view, that every child may ſee and judge of it. It was not long ſince that a preacher in a Methodiſt pulpit delivered himſelf to this effect. "My friend had lived an *exemplary life*; his conduct, humanly ſpeaking, was unexceptionable: being on his death-bed, he was aſked *if he had not the feelings of the certainty of future bliſs*; he anſwered, no: adding, that his ſpirits were frequently very low; however, *that he belived in the promiſes of the goſpel*; *that his hopes were founded in them*; and that he truſted *in the mercies of God through the merits of Jeſus Chriſt*." What would the *Methodiſts* make of this man? Was he too a ſon of reprobation? Was the preacher *no Methodiſt?* or are the *Methodiſts* coming-about?

Upon *their principles*, they muſt ſet down ſeriouſly *to prove*, *that even with ſuch belief*, *ſuch hope*, *and ſuch truſt*, *after a well-ſpent life*, *this man*, *not having the* FEELINGS *in queſtion*, *was not converted*, *nor conſequently in a ſtate of ſalvation*. There are, it ſeems, *certain feelings* by which they can judge if they are *regenerate* or not. Now, I preſume, if a man does not know that he has *ſuch feelings*, he cannot be ſaid to have them; and without them I ſuppoſe he has no *aſſurance* of his *converſion*, and without *aſſurance of his converſion*, he cannot entertain any other hope of his *ſalvation*, than that his converſion

verſion (ſo characteriſed as the Methodiſts would have it be) muſt *firſt come*. Now if it comes not, I ſhould be glad to know, *what the ſituation of the man is?* I ſuppoſe there is no other proof of converſion, and that it is common to all the *converted*. If there is *any other proof*, *what do they allow ſuch proof to be?* May a man be in a ſtate of ſalvation *without* this *feeling?* If he may, why this mighty ſtreſs laid upon it? If he *cannot* be in this ſtate without it, then the *preacher's friend* was not in ſuch a ſtate, notwithſtanding his *faith* and *good works*. Strange and wonderful indeed! Methodiſm muſt ſurely be a bad rule of faith, if it ſhuts ſuch men out of paradiſe! If we *muſt not reaſon*, we may adopt *Judaiſm*, *Mahomedaniſm*, or *Paganiſm*, as well as *Chriſtianity*: but even with regard to theſe faiths, we find that *reaſon* was not given to no end, or as if the great judge of mankind will make no appeal, at the *day of account*, to that which is to the ſpirit of man, what the eye is to his body; he cannot poſſibly find his way without it.

Can you tell me, if, according to the Methodiſts, there muſt be an *aſſurance* of the *favor of God* to entitle a man *to that favor?* If a favor is granted before he knew any thing of the matter, which I preſume muſt be the caſe, ſuppoſe he were never to know it till he enjoys it, would it be leſs *his*, or leſs a *favor*, or render him the *leſs* happy? But if he *preſumes* that ſuch favor is certainly granted him, does he not act, or think, diametrically contrary to the *meekneſs*, the *humility*, and reſignation which characteriſes *chriſtianity?* Upon my word, Sir,

theſe pretended good chriſtians ſeem to ſet the whole chriſtian doctrine at war with itſelf. Their preſumptions reverſe the declaration of *Chriſt*: they ſeem to juſtify the *phariſee* rather than the *publican*. Happy will it be to find our way to heaven by the means that the preacher, whom I have quoted, declared of his *dying friend!*

Whilſt theſe people decry *reaſon*, they ſeem ignorant that they are either aſpiring to the ſtate of angels, or ſinking themſelves to a level with *beaſts*. But let them exalt their *faith* and notions of *illuminations* ever ſo high, the *ſcriptures* remain juſt as they were before: and let *us* remember, that we are neither more, nor leſs than *men*; and as ſuch, one may indeed ſay, CORRUPTION *thou art my father*; *and thou, O* WORM, *art my ſiſter! But, O* RIGHTEOUS *and* OMNISCIENT GOD, *thou haſt ſtampt thy image on my ſoul, by the faculties with which thou haſt endowed it. Thou haſt graciouſly revealed thy will, and given me powers to underſtand what thou requireſt of me. Let me not efface that image, by any vain or arrogant opinion; but teach me to cultivate my reaſon, thy firſt great gift, that by it I may be led to faith in thy Being and Attributes, and participate in the glorious redemption which thou haſt appointed. Let me feel the efficacy of thy goodneſs, in my life and converſation; and receive the influence of thy power in the way moſt agreeable to thy incomprehenſible wiſdom, though I ſhould not underſtand the manner of its operation; for in thee, all knowledge, power, and glory centre, for ever and ever!*

The true paths of felicity are not difficult to find; they are pointed out by *God himſelf*: but if men will be *lazy*

or

or *frantic*, paſſively immoral, or actively iniquitous againſt the light of *reaſon* and *revelation*, it is no wonder to ſee them *bewildered*. In the mean time, we often behold great *ſinners* aſpire at being great *ſaints*. Their imaginations are ſtrong, and unhabituated to the meaſure of the human powers; and *breathing* after righteouſneſs, are not contented with the ordinary means of grace: whilſt others, of a different complexion, require to be flogged with religious admonitions, before they can feel any *impreſſions*. Suppoſe a man, in the firſt caſe, ſhould pretend to walk always on *tiptoe*, when nature intended him to walk on the flat of his feet, we ſhould not be ſurprized if he *tumbled*. If *reaſon*, *revelation*, and *obedience* are not ſufficient guides, without the *ſenſible operations of the Spirit of God* working in our hearts, my wonder is, that this ſenſible operation ſhould be found among ſo few *wiſe* and good men, who labor with all their powers to ſubdue their wills to the divine law, and exert all their ſtrength to diſcharge their duty to God, in the manner moſt agreeable to his written law. It is indeed ſo amazing, that we muſt either conclude that a *new revelation* has been made known to theſe people, as the *true elect*, as they call themſelves; or that their pretences are the effects of rank *folly* and *deluſion*: and if their lives and diſcourſes corroborate this opinion, then we ſhall ceaſe to wonder that ſo few perſons of education or ſentiment, give-in to their principles.

In the mean time the *Methodiſts* read *the ſcriptures*, though they do not underſtand them; and whilſt they

are miſguided by ſuch abſurd conſtructions, many of thoſe who *laugh at them* do not appear to have read them at all. I wiſh the *principles* of the Methodiſts may be underſtood more clearly by being brought on the *ſtage*. I queſtion if the character of the *bawd*, in the MINOR, has any exiſtence, having found from the honeſt declarations of ſome, who are only ſimple proſtitutes, that they ſeldom trouble the church, or think about worſhipping God, in any place. If this character does *not* exiſt, then the whole fabric of the *drama* is built on falſe grounds: if it *does* exiſt, is it ſo proper a ſubject for the theatre, as for *St. Luke's Hoſpital?* This dramatic piece may poſſibly intimidates ſome from becoming *Methodiſts*, but however *popular* it may be, I am very doubtful concerning the *propriety* of the meaſure, as to the end of correcting the *enthuſiaſm* in queſtion. It is wittily ſaid indeed, that this comedy "has ſhaken the *pillars of Tottenham tabernacle*;" and I muſt add, that I believe no harm would happen were it to *tumble*, provided the poor people who frequent it, were at their *work*, or ſaying their prayers in their pariſh-churches. But my apprehenſions are, that whilſt we deride the *abuſe* of the ſcriptures, the *ſcriptures themſelves* will not be thought of at all, or treated too *familiarly*.

Never was uſeful learning at a greater height: never was there an age more enlightened: never did the powers of reaſon beam forth, and the knowledge of the ſcriptures ſhine brighter than at this time; it is therefore amazing that people ſhould run after ſuch conceits

as the Methodiſts adopt. But, for the ſame reaſon, if the clergy uſe the *weapons* which the *ſcriptures* furniſh them with; and by gentle and perſuaſive means, exerting the powers of *reaſon* and genuine faith, the benevolence that humanity dictates, and the zeal which chriſtianity inſpires, they might find medicines for this *fever*, as they often do, I hope, for the *cold-fit* in religion.

Theatrical entertainments do not extend to one in a *hundred* of thoſe who are in moſt need of correction. And for the ſame reaſon that one may eaſily obſerve a very fatal propenſity to favor thoſe *ſcenes* which are *looſe* and *immoral*, there is too much cauſe to apprehend that *dramatic* performances relating to *miſtakes in religion*, will, at the ſame time they excite *laughter*, diminiſh the awe of thoſe *tremendous* conſiderations which already make much too faint *an impreſſion*. The erroneous opinions which prevailed, when our Saviour was on earth, though of the moſt *inveterate kind*, were refuted by *reaſon*, *argument*, and appeals to the common ſenſe and conſciences of men, as well as by *miracles*. And can any one think that ridicule is the teſt of truth, though it ſometimes leads to the diſcovery of it? And are not *characters* often worked up beyond truth, when it is meant, to render a theatrical *repreſentation* agreeable? I cannot undertake to determine but that this piece may have done ſome good; but I do not like this *mode* of reforming the *Methodiſts*. Perhaps I ſhould have been better reconciled, if ſome character of a *ſenſible man*, with a maſculine piety, and reſolution to *act the true chriſtian*,

ſtian, were ſet in contraſt with the *fooliſh* or *wicked* characters in the *drama*, that there might be ſomething to *pleaſe*, as well as ſomething to *laugh* at: for with regard to myſelf, I am not inclined to *laugh*, when I am not *pleaſed*; and I lament the *mental* deluſion of an *innocent* perſon, as I feel for the bodily ſufferings of a guilty one. We do not laugh at *madmen*; nor do we refuſe to give milk to thoſe who cannot digeſt other food.

If the *theatre* becomes a corrector in any matter of faith, is there not *ſome danger* of turning *faith in general* into a *comedy* or a *farce?* This is what I ſhould be afraid of, were ſuch repreſentations to be much countenanced. For you muſt have obſerved, that this nation in general, is apt to be as *whimſical* in their faſhions, as the *Methodiſts* in the particular cut of their *piety* and *faith:* and whim and fancy of one kind, being oppoſed to whim and fancy of another, reaſon and religion may poſſibly be put between *two fires*, and wounded on both ſides.

It ought to be farther conſidered, that if ample *pecuniary* emoluments are drawn from ſuch repreſentations, as there is the ſtronger inducement for ſome to exhibit them, there is the ſtronger reaſon for others to be jealous of the conſequences of ſuch exhibitions. And though I do not pretend that any miſchief is *yet* done, I would guard againſt evils which probably may happen hereafter.

As to the *peruke* and *ſhoemaker declaimers*, whoſe recommendation is conſummate impudence, warm imaginations, and the remembrance of texts which they have no capacity to underſtand, it would be an indignity offered

fered to the chriſtian prieſtood to call ſuch perſons *teachers*, or *preachers* of the goſpel. And as to the *gentlemen* of methodiſtical tenets, who have had a ſcholaſtic education, how few amongſt them are there, who would not *face about to the* RIGHT, for the conſideration of a good eccleſiaſtical *beneſice!* I have very *particular reaſons* to believe the major part of them would conform to church orthodoxy, and *intelligible* chriſtianity, if they did not find a better *living* in another way. And what do you think of the *heroes* of the ſtage, whoſe *calling* it is, to repreſent all things that *are*, and all things which *are not* in nature: will *they* not turn to the *right* hand or to the *left*, as the humour or taſte of the ſpectator inclines. Upon my word, *Sir*, I am much afraid that the glittering imagination of a crowded benefit-night, might induce many of them to ſay whatever the poet ſhould put in their mouths; and many improper things, levelled againſt errors in faith, may inadvertently ſlip the *examination* of dramatic writings. In ſhort, though I love the ſtage under reſtrictions, I think we ſhall be wonderfully changed, if *actors* become exemplary enough in their lives and manners, to induce us to commit the guardianſhip of any part of our *faith* to their cuſtody.

Beſides, we may *amuſe* ourſelves, but the *Methodiſts* are viſionary enough to look on themſelves, as one of their writers calls them, "a peculiar people, planted by the hand of God in the midſt of a very wicked, ſinful, and rebellious generation."— And will the theatre induce them to believe they are *abſurd*, enthuſiaſtic, or *ſinful?*

ful? We may alſo *imagine*, that this kind of public *ridicule* will drive them out of their *whims*: will it not rather make them *conſiderable* in their own opinion, by being thus taken notice of?

One of their advocates ſays, "The *Devils* may, and in all probability do mimick and ridicule the *Angels*; but are thoſe bleſſed ſpirits therefore ridiculous in themſelves?" —This is an odd conceit, and like ſome of their other fancies. I ſuppoſe the *Methodiſts* ſtand here in the place of *angels*: but one might with as little impropriety aſk the author, if he thinks there is any *ſtage-playing* in the dominions of *Lucifer?* It may at the ſame time be worthy of notice, that whilſt theſe people condemn the ſtage as an abomination, without regard to the ſubject, or conduct of a play, or whether the *poet* or the *actor* be chaſte or not, their preachers imitate the meaneſt underlings of the *buſkin tribe*; and whilſt the poet never intends to leave the underſtanding out of the queſtion, their preachers often neglect it totally.

We all agree, that theſe enthuſiaſts would increaſe by *perſecution*; and what do they judge this theatrical repreſentation to be? One of them tells us, "it is no ſmall honor, and ſhould be a great comfort to the *Methodiſts*, that they are treated in a manner ſo much reſembling the treatment of the *primitive chriſtians!*" He goes on; "but the Methodiſts are *enthuſiaſts*, ſo the *primitive chriſtians* were alſo called; nay, the very apoſtles themſelves did not eſcape that opprobrious term *." You ſee how they

* See page 545. in relation to St. *Paul* and *Felix*.

they *burſt* with ſanctity, and how ingenious they are to draw concluſions in their own favor, by the compariſons of characters which have no ſimilitude. Upon the whole, the malady ſeems to lie too deep to be reached by the *theatre*; for if theſe people think theatres are forbidden by chriſtianity, the uſe of them on this occaſion, will confirm them in their opinion of their own ſuperior holineſs. I grant the thing need not be referred to any better iſſue, if this is effectual; but it does not appear to me, to be out of the reach of true *zeal* and *ſound doctrine*: and if a *noble inſtrument* can be uſed in ſuch a *cauſe*, is it conſiſtent with the dignity of *religion* to uſe one which has any mixture of baſeneſs? If reaſon and true zeal, unite their force againſt *no reaſon* and *miſtaken zeal*: if *learning* is oppoſed to *ignorance*, and *religious toil* againſt *enthuſiaſtic induſtry*, I apprehend we ſhall ſoon ſee *victory* declare on the ſide of truth, even among the greateſt votaries of folly and *deluſion*.

I told you I had read part of two little volumes, ſaid to be written by a prelate, I mean the *Enthuſiaſm of Methodiſts and Papiſts compared*. The detail therein given of the hiſtory of Enthuſiaſm in ſeveral countries; the quotations from the journals of the Methodiſts; and the high encomiums on themſelves, compared with the 9, 10, 11, 12, 13, and 14th verſes of the xviii chap. of St. *Luke*, are ſufficient to preſerve any man from Methodiſm, unleſs his judgment is clouded with melancholy, or his ſpirit exalted with *enthuſiaſtic* preſumption.

Whilſt

Whilſt I am writing, I have a viſit from a well-meaning perſon who is a *Methodiſt*, and from whom I have received the ſtrongeſt teſtimony, and it affords ſome *new* matter. They ſay *they may be ſaved by faith, without good works*; but then they add, but *not without an holy life*. Here is a very nice diſtinction; can a life be holy, without the performance of ſuch duties, which in the eye of reaſon, and in the language of ſcripture, are denominated *good works?* If it cannot, the Methodiſts *cannot* be ſaved without *good* works: but they ſay they *can*, under a certain ſtate of converſion, nay, that they indubitably *ſhall* be ſaved. — And what ſays the Saviour of mankind with regard to this part of the conditions of ſalvation? "I was hungry and ye "gave me meat," *a good work*; "thirſty and ye gave "me drink," *another good work*; "naked and ye "clothed me," *a further good work*. And are not theſe, and ſuch like works, required of us, as objects preſent themſeves to us, according to our capacity of relieving them? Is there a more expreſs and authentic command in holy writ, to warn us againſt *evil works*, than to excite us by every kind of precept, to encourage us by every promiſe, to animate us by every great and noble example, to *good works?* "To promote the ſincere and uniform practice of theſe, Chriſt came from heaven." And whatever wonderful calls and illuminations may be pretended to, can *you*, or any man in his *right mind*, believe that ſuch calls and illuminations exiſt, if they *fruſtrate* any part

of

of *Chriſt's* commiſſion; much leſs if they counteract the chief deſign and end of his coming?

Where then is the doctrine of the *Methodiſts*, and their great honor for the *Saviour of the world*, if ſo much efficacy is aſcribed to *faith* in his merits, that it is imagined men may be ſaved by them, without a compliance with the terms which himſelf has declared to be neceſſary?—And how far will the abſurdity lead us: if without *good works* we may be ſaved; may we not be ſaved, notwithſtanding our *bad ones*, even if thoſe bad ones ſhould be unrepented of? Does not the doctrine lean to this ſide of the queſtion? not to do *good works*, is in one ſenſe to do *bad ones:* for it is not conſiſtent with the nature of man to be *inactive*. How abſurd ſoever it may appear, *ſome* of theſe deluded mortals have carried it this length, by ſaying, "*Art thou a ſinner? Mighty well!—Art thou a vile and reprobate ſinner? Better ſtill! Art thou a loſt and undone ſinner? Beſt of all! It was for ſuch as thee that Chriſt died.*"—Is not this a way of ſtating the argument, as if it were calculated to make the *unlettered* believe, that in order to *ſecure ſalvation*, it is *neceſſary* to be a *ſinner*.—We are all logicians in a certain degree; but when we depart from *common ſenſe*, we are apt to draw very ridiculous and wild concluſions: and I ſhould not be ſurprized to hear a Methodiſt ſay, "*Who would not be ſuch a one as thoſe for whom Chriſt died? The preacher ſays, that the greater ſinner I am,* IT IS BEST OF ALL; *therefore in order the better to ſecure to myſelf the merits of the death of Chriſt, it is beſt of all to be as great a ſinner as I*

can be, even if I ſhould expoſe myſelf to ſuffer the puniſhment of temporal death!"—There is nothing ſo monſtrous which ſuch wild doctrines do not lead to? The vileſt part of *Paganiſm* is not worſe, than the deductions which may be made from ſuch tenets propagated amongſt the illiterate: for as mankind become truly enlightened by degrees, as hiſtory abundantly proves; ſo the ſame hiſtory informs us, that by degrees they ſink into brutal ignorance, ſuperſtition, and idolatry; and the blackeſt crimes have been committed under a notion of religious acts, and to appeaſe an offended deity! And though we muſt not expect that the *cobler* will enter ſo deeply into the argument, yet one would imagine that the *paſtor*, who *lives* by the fooliſhneſs of the cobler, ſhould conſider a little, that, under a notion of promoting morality amongſt the illiterate, he may lay the foundation of anarchy and confuſion both in morals and religion.

Upon the whole, I apprehend that all *Methodiſts* do not agree, but *in general* their conſtruction of the ſcriptures, is *involved*, and contrary to all *common ſenſe*, inſomuch that it will fall of itſelf. And whilſt we have ſo many great and good men in our church, who, without thundering out their *anathemas in fire and ſmoke*, inſtruct and perſuade with ſuch *apoſtolical energy*, and force of reaſoning, at the ſame time referring us to the *wiſdom* and *mercy* of the great author of nature, through the meritorious ſufferings and death of a crucified Redeemer; though ſome of them are, I apprehend, too delicate, and do not ſpeak of hell and damnation in terms

ſufficiently ſtrong, yet they do not frighten men into falſe and abſurd notions of *religion*. The more *amiable* it is repreſented, the more we ſhall ſeek it. And if men of *true abilities* to promote religion are not encouraged, it will be the fault of the *laity*.—I hope the Methodiſts will come to their ſenſes, and return ſoberly to their pariſh churches, where they may worſhip God as fervently as they pleaſe, after the manner of their fathers: and that the *vicar* and his *curate* will look to *their part*, that ſound doctrine and ſubſtantial ſenſe, accompanied by *fervent piety*, be ſo taught, that theſe deluded people may ſee the abſurdity of running after *new* and *ſtrange* doctrines.

I was in doubt, whether there might not be *ſomething* in Methodiſm worthy of attention, though it was evident from their books that ſeveral things in it were *hurtful*. I did not chuſe to be guided by popular reports; and I happened not to have any intimacy with a ſingle Methodiſt. I was therefore held in ſome kind of ſuſpence as to the quantity of merit or injury contained in it. I am now ſatisfied in all points, and have only to add, that if we conſider the love of God, and the living in fear of offending him, as the *firſt*, and moſt eſſential part in the life of a chriſtian; to reduce this principle into practice, and engage others to do the ſame, muſt be the *next* article: we ſhall then love our neighbors, conſult the good of mankind, watch for opportunities, and ſpare no pains to promote it. To conſider the *health*, the *comforts*, the *peace* and *happineſs* of others as our own, conſtantly relieving

lieving the *indigent*, informing the *ignorant*, calming the furious minded, and admoniſhing the *proud* profligate, pouring oil into the wounds of the afflicted, and cheering thoſe who are in the way of happineſs: theſe are the offices which chriſtianity requires, and theſe are the duties which will ſupport the character of one who means to do, what he thinks he *ought to do*, as a *man*, and as a *chriſtian*. The performance of ſuch duties will afford him no ſmall portion of delight, let the difficulties he meets with be ever ſo great. If he is watchful that neither *luſt* nor *intemperance*, *pride* nor *vanity*, *anger* nor *enmity*, *avarice* nor *ambition*, nor any other appetite or paſſion which may *pollute* or *diſtract* his ſoul, ſhall get the dominion over him: if his infirmities occaſionally betray him, and he implores the pardon of heaven, and becomes the more watchful for the time to come: if he cultivates that *meekneſs*, *candor* and *humanity*, that love of *truth* and *juſtice*, that belief of the great doctrines which lead him to conſider CHRIST as his *Lawgiver*, his *Sovereign*, his *Judge*, his *Redeemer* and only *Mediator with God*; if he does this, it will keep him in *conſtant awe*. And if he prays to heaven in *public* or *private*, for the aſſiſtance of the *holy Spirit of God*, in the way which the divine wiſdom ſhall think fit to give it; if he *lives* and *dies* in this temper, we may pronounce him a *happy man*. Though ſuch a perſon ſhould not have ſuch certain aſſurance of everlaſting felicity, as the Methodiſts pretend to, yet he knows that the *great diſpoſer of all things* is infinitely *juſt* and *merciful*; and he will *feel*, in the moſt

moſt ſenſible manner, that *hope* ſupplies the ſame *great end*; and that divine Providence has ordained it *ſhall* be ſo. Nor is it conſiſtent with the nature and conſtitution of things, placed as we are, in a *probational ſtate*, that we ſhould be permitted to know this important ſecret. We muſt wait the GREAT TEACHER DEATH, and by our waiting *give proof of our obedience* and *religious fear*.

With regard to ſeveral diſtinctions, to which we now apply the *name of Methodiſt*, I muſt obſerve, that if the *real Methodiſts* are under deluſions, as we ſuppoſe, and we *really* mean to ſuppreſs their doctrines, ſurely we ſhould not give the *name* to any perſon, on account of certain practices, which a *ſober-minded chriſtian* may think eſſential, without having ever heard the name of *Methodiſt*. But ſo long as we aſcribe *acts of piety, of the moſt diſtinguiſhed kind, to the name*, we aſcribe it to the *principle*, which in fact is doing *honor* to the very thing we mean to *diſgrace*.

If, for inſtance, ſome chriſtians ſhould not chuſe to play at cards on *Sundays*; or not to play *at any time*, for any object that can *agitate* their own paſſions, or do any injury to another; or not to waſte *much* time. If they ſhould be ſo *tender minded* as not to allow of the *faſhionable anſwer* being made, *of not at home*, when they *are*, but cannot *conveniently* ſee company. If they go to *divine ſervice* punctually every day, either in *public* or in *private*: If they are remarkably *ſimple* in their dreſs, with

with a view to *ſave* for charitable purpoſes, or to avoid the *pride of life:* if they are uncommonly attentive to the duty of *giving alms*, with ſuch like good diſpoſitions. I ſay, if ſuch people are denominated *Methodiſts*, becauſe ſome Methodiſts may happen to do the very ſame things, we ſhall never clear the land of their ſtrange doctrines, for by ſuch means the real Methodiſts will floriſh under the ſuppoſed protection of the moſt reſpectable characters: whilſt the difference may be as great, as to ſome eſſential characteriſtics of chriſtianity, as between a *Chriſtian* and a *Mahommedan*. If we blend the truly *pious* and the *enthuſiaſt* together, the *beſt chriſtians* will be ſo far in a ſtate of defamation: the conduct moſt deſerving imitation will be *ridiculed*; "the virtues flowing from the pureſt minds be *ſlighted*, as if they had their ſource in fancy and fanaticiſm:" and the intereſt of religion will be wounded, by the very people who pretend to be its champions. Therefore I hope we ſhall make *juſt* diſtinctions, and not *adminiſter* to that confuſion, which always attends *fanaticiſm*.

I believe with you, that ſome Methodiſts do occaſionally attend the public worſhip, as performed according to the eſtabliſhed rites of our church; but none whom in conſcience I can call *genuine chriſtians*, attend the *Methodiſts*, except it be to receive conviction, concerning the falſe wild doctrines which they teach.

There

There are doubtleſs ſome very good *ignorant* people who are *Methodiſts*; but ſome, ſtiled *Methodiſts*, are *not ſuch*, tho' they were favorers of the *leaders* of *Methodiſts*, when theſe diſtinguiſhed themſelves, by preaching with uncommon energy; but when they advanced *new doctrines*, and finding themſelves of conſideration with the rabble, became ſchiſmatics in principle, inſtead of zealots for chriſtianity, the pious perſons, whom I allude to, followed theſe leaders no longer.

Let nominal *chriſtians* differ, as they may, in opinion about *faith* or *works*, thoſe are not *entitled* even to the *name*, who do not acknowledge the immutable obligations of both; and they alſo ceaſe to *deſerve* it, when they ſuffer any prejudices to feed their *preſumption*, to obſtruct their *charity* for mankind, or hurt the intereſt and happineſs of their *country*.

FAREWEL.

CONCLUSION.

To the Rev. Mr. N.

I preſume, Sir, you will be ready to conclude, from what I told you in my laſt, that the inſtitution of the *Magdalane Charity* is an effort of *extraordinary piety*; and *ſo it is*; but *reaſon*, as well as *religion*, confine it to its proper object. The ſeveral gentlemen who are concerned in the direction, give the ſtrongeſt proofs of their *good ſenſe*, as well as *religious diſpoſition*, by obſerving the utmoſt *purity and conformity*; and there ſeems to be a fair proſpect of ſucceſs.

Without making this retreat deſirable to any, but *the very wretched*, if we can take off the ſharp edge of that pungent miſery, to which many unhappy creatures are

 expoſed,

expoſed, we ſhall certainly do a *good work*; and experience proves that we *can* nearly draw the proper line. The object ſeems to me to turn upon this ſingle point: *Shall we ſuccor the parentleſs young girl, who became a prey before ſhe well knew her crime? — Shall we relieve the diſtreſſed friendleſs female, who, conſcious of her iniquities, and expoſed to penury, contempt, infamy, and diſeaſe, ſupplicates for mercy from God and men? — or, ſhall we leave them to periſh, tho' we* CAN *preſerve them; and tho' we believe they will periſh if we do* NOT *receive them under our protection?* — This is the ſtate of the caſe; and I truſt that the moſt ſenſible part of our fellow-ſubjects will ſee it in this light; that they will be perſuaded this charity will ſave many *bodies* and *ſouls* from perdition, and at the ſame time do honor to the nation, both in a civil and religious view. No candid perſon who ſees, and underſtands how it operates, can diſpute this fact.

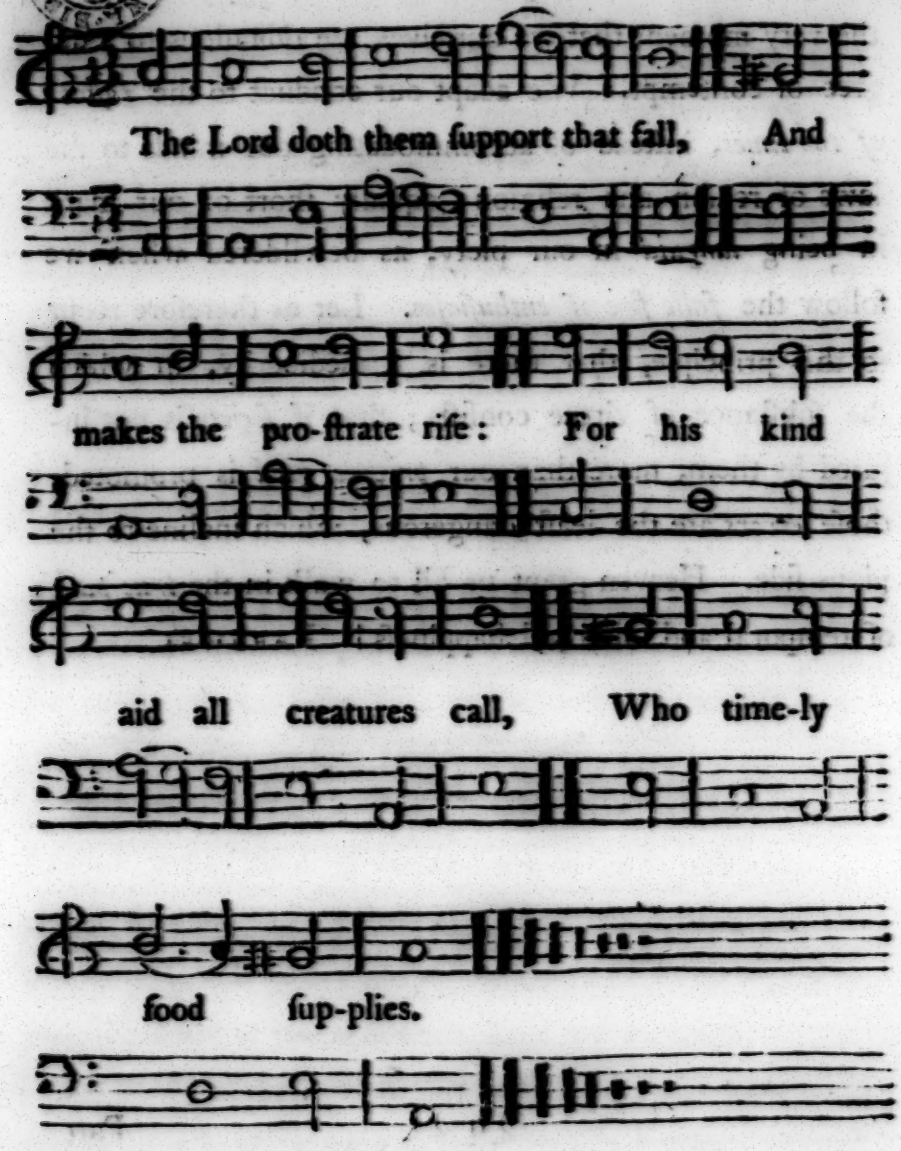
You have ſeen what I have been about, and how much I am obliged to *poets*. If you approve of the *humble pſalm* incloſed, I intend to be a little indebted to *muſicians* alſo. Do you think it will be deemed *tabernaculous?* With regard to *yourſelf*, I know you will underſtand my meaning.

As to the inſertion of my name, I agree with you, that where *ſubject*, *ſentiment*, and *ſtyle*, equally betray, diſguiſe looks like an *affection of importance* rather than *humility*. Beſides, a conſcious integrity creates a contempt of all *little obſervers*; and it ſeems to be a duty in ſuch caſes as this, to appear *openly* for the *cauſe* we eſpouſe. Awed by *falſe modeſty*, and a ſervile kind of *timidity*, the moſt rational zeal, and the moſt *manly* piety are often

neglected; and the uſe of things intrinſically good, as often laid aſide as *fooliſh*, merely becauſe fooliſh people abuſe them.—We *laugh* at others, or *deſpiſe* them, at the very moment that we ourſelves are ridiculous to a degree of contempt. We adapt our conduct to the *faſhion of the times*, inſtead of accommodating our minds to the laws of reaſon and religion; equally ſhort of our mark in being *languid* in our piety, as bewildered when we follow the *falſe fire of enthuſiaſm*. Let us therefore recur to this principle, that there is a mediocrity, in which the ſubſtance of virtue conſiſts; that if *ſociety* is not injured by them, more than our *private good* is promoted, thoſe *errors* are the leaſt dangerous, which incline to the pious ſide. Heaven grant us all to walk in the *true path* of temporal and immortal happineſs! FAREWEL.

Part of PSALM CXLV.

1.



2.

Whate'er their various wants require
With open hands he gives:
And he fulfils the juſt deſire,
Of ev'ry thing that lives.

3.

3.

He grants the full requeſts of thoſe
Who him with fear adore;
And will their troubles ſoon compoſe,
If they his aid implore.

4.

The Lord preſerves all thoſe with care,
Whom grateful love employs;
But ſinners, who his vengeance dare
With dreadful wrath deſtroys.

5.

My time to come, in praiſes ſpent,
Shall ſtill advance his fame!
And all mankind with one conſent,
For ever bleſs his name!

THE END.

